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June 1998

A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE

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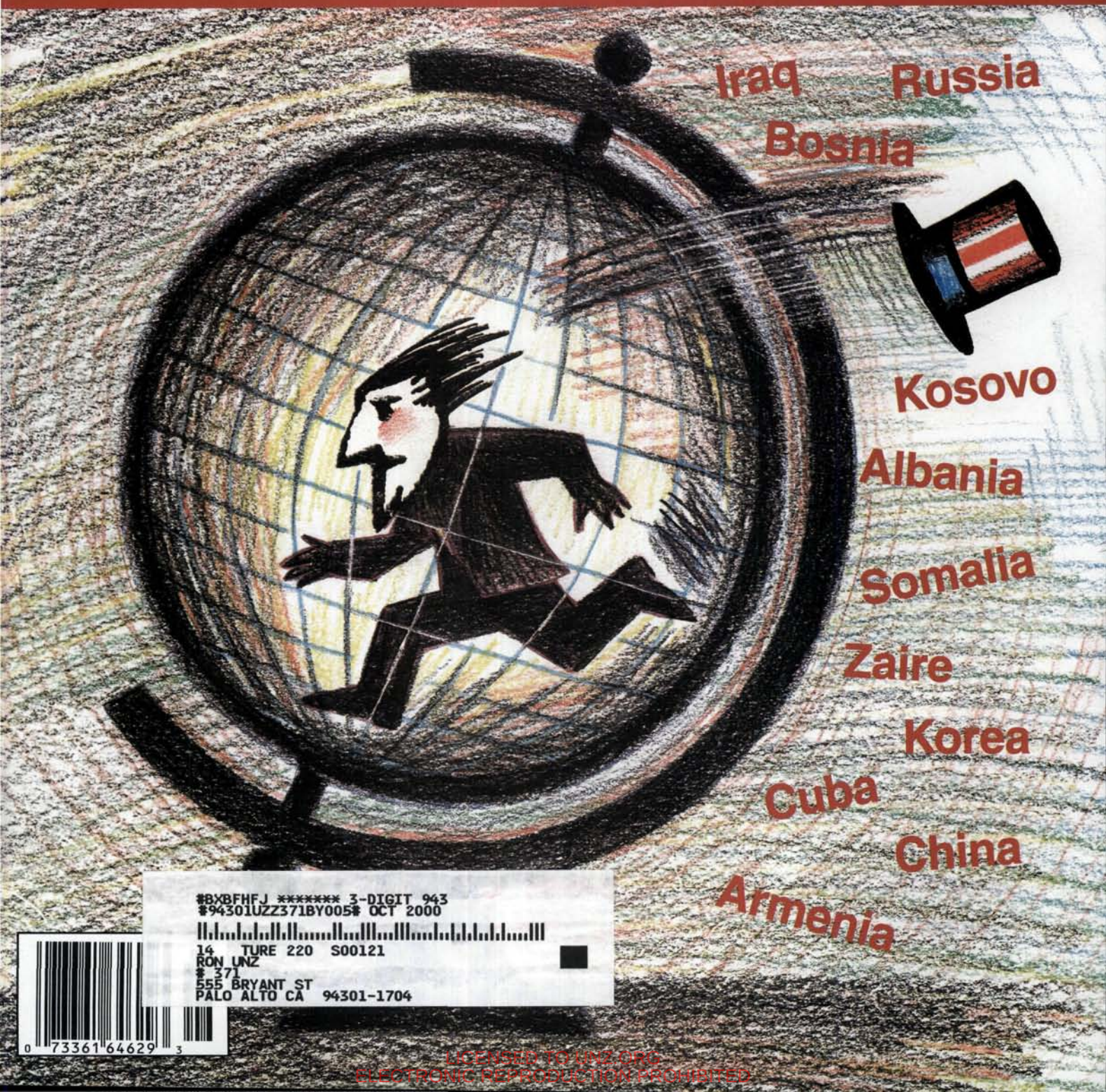

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A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE

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On Fascism and Anti-Fascism

The novelty of 20th-century historiography does not reside in new theories (the last century was too rich in this respect), but in the veto exercised over its main issues. One such, the issue of communism, has been half-opened by François Furet and Stephen Courtois; the other, the issue of Hitlerism, is still under the interdict of the intellectual establishment. Jean-Paul Sartre used to be praised for saying that the century's outstanding event was not the two world wars but the rise of communism; yet Hitler's rise to power is explained away as evil magic, treated like a black hole, known only for the period's satanic mills. Otherwise, it was a non-event. Little children in America's schools are told (in "social studies" classes!) to write about the "bad Nazis," but historians researching the why's and how's of the period are also expected to cancel their efforts at objectivity.

Chronicles' remarkable March issue ("Fascism/Anti-Fascism: It's still the same old story . . . ") tries to break through the barriers of censorship, although it is hard to open new channels when the legitimate ones are clogged by historians *cum ira et studio*. The question remains: Are we going to write about the Hitlerian period as a legitimate part of European history, or are we forever to employ the Orwellian (and Soviet) strategy to omit, re-write, and stuff down the memory hole true events and objective interpretations?

The so-called clichés and subterfuges of the Hitler era are genuine facts and historical factors. Bismarckian Germany (in 1920) lay morally and materially broken to pieces after Versailles, mainly the work of the French negotiators under the inspiration of Maurice Barrès and Charles Maurras. The humiliation was proportionate with Germany's earlier arrogance; the misery proportionate with the pre-1914 bourgeois prosperity-*cum*-welfare state. From 1920 to 1932, Germany was a cloaca, or at any rate the sick man of Europe. As Hitler approached power, new sectors of society found hope for revival. His methods and street-fights were not different from those of the communists, but at least the Nazis, unlike the Reds, were not agents of a foreign power. In the eyes of an increasing number of citizens, Weimar democracy was a ludicrous circus-show, and if medicine was to be administered, it had to be from the right.

Hitler had arrived from Vienna, itself a kind of model for "Weimar," a mini-Sodom, as Karl Kraus described it. Civilization was on the decline, whether you follow Spengler, Carlyle, or Ortega. In this, Europe's best minds agreed, but Hitler's advantage over them was his non-status as an intellectual and thus his openness to concrete action inspired by popular philosophies and even more popular sciences: ethnology, psychology, biology, Darwinism. Hitler's conversations with Hermann Rauschning (the German commissioner in Danzig, later a teacher in Oregon) tell the story, almost in its entirety. (I have the 362*nd* French edition from 1939). Let's simplify it, as if it were a Washington-based talk show: Are you a racist? asked Rauschning, National-Socialist head of the Danzig government. Hitler explained: No, separate races, racial superiority are false notions, as any animal breeder will tell you. But this is the 20th century; science, including political science, has yielded to *myth* as a new principle, a new motor of history. In dealing with masses, nations, "races," we must coordinate and lead them with big, half-obscure ideas. Communism and democracy are such. With Germans, democracy will not work; we choose different methods to restore national unity and the élan of collective will.

In propounding these notions—like them or not, they contain some contemporary truths, universally practiced—Hitler had good company. His ideas (I well remember) were far more popular than Marxism and liberalism. Reflecting on the inert human mass brought Father Teilhard de Chardin to regard concentration camps in Russia, Japan, and Germany as evolution's efforts to massify mankind, endow it with a rudimentary collective consciousness. And I remember hearing UNESCO director Julian Huxley expound on the blessed future of humanity's "collective head" at the Hague in 1946. Twenty years later in Brazil, Archbishop Helder Camara (vari-

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ously called a "Marxist specimen" and a "second Goebbels") entertained me with similar ideas of world unification. (Call it "globalization" if you wish.) And how about New Age, or the Reverend Moon's mass wedding across the planet?

Srdja Trifkovic mentioned in the March issue that communism was not a snowy import from the Russian steppes, but a pure European product, containing verities and falsehoods, intellectual errors, mass-illusions. Yes, but so was Hitlerism: not a breakup of history but a part of it, with some respectable roots, and many poisonous consequences. Like Athens organizing the Delian League, like the Crusades, like Napoleon in Egypt and in Russia—it is all human handiwork. One cannot outlaw history or any of its chapters.

—Thomas Molnar
Ridgewood, NJ

On Nazism, Past and Present

In "The Crime of History" (March), Tomislav Sunic was correct that in both the East and the West the vilification of Nazism far exceeded any criticism of communism. This is evident even in our national politics, where the most damning invective that can be used against an opponent is to accuse him of being another Hitler or (even worse) Joe McCarthy. However, Mr. Sunic goes too far by suggesting that "fear of the possible revival of fascism" may "pave the way for the renaissance of 'real' fascism." Such a statement from someone who (however well-intentioned he may be personally) represents Franjo Tudjman's neo-fascist state of Croatia would be almost amusing if it weren't so tragic.

Were the Serbian people just "paranoid" when (with American aid and technology and the assistance of 15 retired U.S. Army mercenary generals) Serbian men, women, and children were driven from their ancestral lands in the Krajina, thus reviving the independent state of Croatia, first established in 1941 by Adolf Hitler? Was it Serbian paranoia when, in Croatia's 1995 "Operation Storm," over 200,000 Serbs were driven from their homes, the largest exodus of refugees in Europe since World War II? Was it paranoia when 5,000 Serbs were murdered, and those too old or infirm to escape the carnage had their throats slit or were shot in the back of the head or burned alive in their houses? Even when Croatian jets strafed fleeing refugees, there was no condemnation from the "civilized" world whose attention was successfully distracted by still unproven claims of genocide at Srebrenica, while the real genocide was taking place against the Serbian people.

This is the same Croatia that greeted German troops early last year with the stiff-armed fascist *Sieg Heil* salute (see *Newsweek*, Jan. 6, 1997) without one word of protest from the media or Congress. The Nazi salute is now executed at official and non-official functions ("Croatian Nazi salute sounded at funeral," *The Times* of London, August 8, 1991).

Reuters News Service reported on February 23 that a Croat rally against Serbs turned ugly "when a group of 100 Croats made fascist salutes, burnt Serb symbols and blocked traffic at a rally intended to intimidate Serb refugees in eastern Croatia. . . . The latest gathering was in front of the Serb Orthodox Church in Baranjsko Petrovo Selo Sunday. . . . Participants built a large fire and burned objects with Serb symbols or writing on them. While standing around the fire, drinking and singing, many participants gave fascist salutes. . . . The rally came a day after unidentified attackers raked with bullets and threw grenades at a Serb house in another village, wounding a 70-year old Hungarian woman in a house nearby." Jewish leader, scholar, and historian Dr. Klara Mandich wrote in the London *Independent*, "What worries us, is that those in power in Croatia are largely the same as in the Nazi era. In some cases, they are exactly the same people, now in their seventies and back from exile under Communists. In other cases, they are children of the Ustashi."

I certainly would not suggest that Mr. Sunic is in sympathy with this undeniable tendency in today's Croatia; indeed, I would hope and expect that he is motivated by a general hostility toward totalitarianism of any stripe: red, brown, or whatever we might call what Clinton and Company are peddling today. Nor do I mean to suggest that others in the new Balkan wars are innocent of similar tendencies, whether we refer to the Islamic regime of Alija Izetbegovic in Sarajevo or the Clinton-supported communist regime of Slobodan Milosevic in Belgrade. But it is at best the height of naivete—and at worst misrepresentation—to suggest that today's regime in Zagreb is anything less than the ideological heir of the "Independent State of Croatia" of Ante Pavelic and his henchmen.

—George Jatras
Sterling, VA

On the IRA

Patrick Walsh's letter to the editor in the April issue of *Chronicles* resurrects a long-discredited lie about the "left-wing Marxist" IRA. For 15 years, that smear kept many Americans, including me, from supporting democracy for the occupied Irish. Then, on July 5, 1987, the London *Observer* reported that the lie had been fabricated in the 1970's by then British Army Information Captain Colin Wallace. The British news media promptly and permanently ceased to refer to the "Marxist IRA," but the more brazen Chicago news editors, to whom we had provided the *Observer*'s story, continued to refer to the "Marxist IRA" until 1989, when they stopped without explanation. Wallace later described how he and MI6 had succeeded in turning America against the IRA by getting U.S. news editors to believe his lie.

Wallace paid dearly for his recantation and his refusal to participate in state terrorism: his bosses framed him for a murder, and he served some six years before he was completely exonerated and freed.

Were Wallace's Big Lie not so destructive of democracy, it would be comical to see Mr. Walsh attempt to revive it a decade after a stake was driven through its heart.

—Mary O'Sullivan
Chicago, IL

On *Sling Blade*

Since I had emerged from the theater in Foley, Alabama, somewhat sickened after watching *Sling Blade*, imagine my surprise when I found Clyde Wilson endorsing the film in *Chronicles* (Cultural Revolutions, November 1997). Because I've met Dr. Wilson and respect him greatly, I figured I must have been a shallow rube the first time I saw the film, and so I recently rented the video of the film to see what I had missed.

However, a second viewing only confirmed my first impressions. The clue to

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what Billy Bob Thornton is really up to is found in Dr. Wilson's piece: the events upon which *Sling Blade* is based took place in Northern California. The reason the movie is set and filmed in Benton (Saline County) Arkansas is not because audiences can't believe in non-Southern accented retarded murderers, but because Hollywood is ever vigilant in its zealous quest to demonize Christianity and that evil of evils, the White Southern Man.

Native Arkansan Thornton knew exactly what he was doing by changing the venue of this tale to his home state. Karl Childers represents Idiot Savant Number 2, following in the footsteps of Forrest Gump. And oh, what he had to endure! His loving mother, he tells us, read him Bible lessons. And how does she live her Christian faith? She permits him to live in a dirt hole in the tool shed, says nothing about her completely demonic husband's infanticide of their second child, and commits adultery as her final living act. But of course this monstrous behavior *can't* happen in Northern California, only somewhere in Dixie.

The film does what it intends to do well, as the audience, even an audience in the Deep South, grits its teeth and roots for Karl to do the deed. But has anyone stopped to consider why Doyle deserves to have his brains chopped up with a lawnmower blade? Yes, he is a loud-mouth, reprobate, drunk, self-centered thug (but not so much of one that he is incapable of running his own construction company) who desperately needs some tough Christian love to see the evil of his ways. But, as Hollywood reminds us, Christianity never did anything but repress us. And so when Karl, the only man tough enough, uninhibited enough, and "brave" enough, slings his blade into Doyle's head, Southern Man is finally, *rightfully*, put to death as well. It seemed to me that most of the audience left the theater convinced that Doyle deserved to die.

I would argue that Clyde Wilson and other Southerners have been duped on this one.

—James Hunter
Atlanta, GA

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CULTURAL REVOLUTIONS

BILL CLINTON's triumphant return from Africa is a bad omen for the next two years. Temporarily liberated from the shackles of Paula Jones's allegations, the President will now be free to run the country exactly as the First Lady sees fit.

During the President's tour of Africa, we got a glimpse of what lies in store for us: a symbolic visit to a slave-trading emporium, symbolic embraces and handholding with retired terrorists like Nelson Mandela, a not-so-symbolic promise of hundreds of millions of American taxpayers' dollars to improve education in Africa.

Most Americans figured out that the President's denunciations of slavery had nothing to do with history or morality and everything to do with domestic politics. After betraying his blue-collar supporters on the trade issue, after Paula, Monica, and Kathleen unmasked his real interest in "women's issues," virtually the only secure block Clinton can count on are black voters. Since he cannot do anything tangible for them—more affirmative action, more welfare, more set-asides are temporarily out of the question—he expects to buy them off with tears and lamentations that will cost us no votes and him no taxes.

While some Americans professed to be shocked by Clinton's public display of affection for Mr. Mandela, it was black South Africans who should have been shocked. Communist terrorist that he was (or is), Mandela has proved to be an effective national leader. The interest of our own beloved leader has never risen above broads and boodle, and some South Africans carried signs warning their fellow-citizens to lock up their daughters.

The master stroke of Clinton's African adventure was the promise of $182 million in aid for education. Education is the liberal answer to everything. Education undermines religious superstition, liberates women and children, and inspires class envy. Even conservatives now think that education is the key to solving all problems: teach a kid a little arithmetic, have him memorize the Gettysburg Address, give him the habit of a regular schedule, and by the age of 16 he'll be ready to clock in at the Ford factory in Kinshasa and spend his $200-a-month paycheck on Levis and Cokes.

We don't even have to come up with the money ourselves. The bankers—those kindly international philanthropists—will be happy to lend the money. All they want are loan guarantees from the IMF and, ultimately, from the American taxpayer, and the master politician who has successfully sold his administration—inch by inch of White House bedrooms and minute by minute of presidential access time—has managed simultaneously to curry favor with international banks and poor black voters.

That is the nature of politics, of course, and if support for education in Africa could help those suffering nations, even some Republicans would be willing to bite the bullet. But will it? What foreign aid has done to African nations is a subject better left undiscussed. Unfortunately, Graham Hancock, in *Lords of Poverty*, has detailed disaster upon disaster of Western aid: it is the same old story of all government welfare programs—a history of boondoggles, rip-offs, and screw-ups. Above all, it is a story of countries like Somalia and Tanzania, whose economy and culture were devastated by the "help" given by the World Bank and the "development assistance" provided by European and North American businesses.

If colonization weren't bad enough, the great colonial powers cut their losses and pulled out, leaving Third World countries to fend for themselves in a competitive world. Then to compound the crime, the Western powers strong-armed these newly created nations into modernization schemes whose only real object is to provide international business with new markets and cheap labor.

Clinton's next brilliant move is to complete the destruction of Africa by saddling its people with the American public education that every sane person over here would like to demolish. Twenty years from now, some naive neoconservative policy analyst will get his 15 minutes of fame pointing out the "unintended consequences" of the policies of this great man (a second Harry Truman). But we already have the advantage of hindsight, and we know that foreign aid to the Third World is a nasty scam. If Bill Clinton is not actually plotting the further ruin of the continent, he has no

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more concern for the welfare of its people than he has for the happiness of the women he invites into his office.

—*Thomas Fleming*

"REMEMBER JONESBORO" is the latest rallying cry of the "If it can happen here, it can happen anywhere" crowd. In one sense, of course, they're obviously correct: no town is immune to the evil influences that convince an 11-year-old and a 13-year-old to shoot and kill their fellow students. But the Jonesboro groupies are disingenuous: Why devote so much attention to an extraordinary event in a sleepy Southern town when every day far more children are killed by other children in America's inner cities? It's not hard to figure out the answer: the killers in Jonesboro were white, and their weapons were legally owned by the grandfather of one of the children. In other words, Jonesboro just proves what the gun-control lobby has argued all along: legal weapons guarantee violence, and Southern rednecks are the greatest threat to peace in America.

The gun-control lobby took up the rallying cry, and undoubtedly President Clinton's decision to release an executive order banning the importation of a Chinese-made copy of the AK-47 was a response to Jonesboro, even though the kids used hunting rifles (invariably described by the media as "high-powered semiautomatic assault weapons"). Mr. Clinton's response was predictable. More disturbing was the rapidity with which "counselors" descended like vultures on Jonesboro. The day after the shootings, 50 grief counselors—some from as far away as Houston—arrived in town. By the time the slain students were buried, over 100 counselors had set up shop. (And once they've set up shop, don't expect them to go away: one year after the bombing of the Murrah Federal Building, parents in Oklahoma City complained that counselors were still hounding their children at school.)

Granted, the good folks of Jonesboro had never experienced anything like this. But were 100 counselors—who did not live in Jonesboro, who had no real understanding of life there—really necessary? Perhaps it would have been better to let the people of Jonesboro struggle with their grief on their own, to let parents—rather than strangers—explain to their children that evil is part of the human condition.

At one time in America, most people would have agreed, and sent the meddlers packing. But today, the therapeutic mentality reigns supreme. Americans are afraid to engage in the most natural actions—cooking, rearing children, treating a cold—without consulting an "expert." And increasingly, they turn their children over to strangers to provide them with sex education, drug and alcohol education, early childhood education. After all, the counselor knows best—but does he?

Last year, both *U.S. News and World Report* and the *New Republic* published stories critical of one of the most far-reaching school counseling organizations, Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE). DARE has come under fire for encouraging students to turn their parents in if they suspect them of using drugs, but studies have also shown that students who participate in the DARE program are more likely to use drugs than those who don't. DARE, of course, claims that the solution is to implement its program at *all* grade levels, not just in elementary schools. But the real clue to the DARE-drug use connection lies in the philosophy of DARE itself, which was summed up nicely by Floyd Hall, Kmart chairman and CEO, when he announced the Kmart Kids Race Against Drugs Tour this spring: "It's important for these kids to realize they can have fun without drugs." Until Mr. Hall and DARE suggested otherwise, most children probably assumed that they could.

A high school student here in Rockford, making a presentation on alcohol abuse at a school board meeting, referred to herself as a "student leader and potential drug user." The drug and alcohol "counselors" who put that thought into her mind both robbed her of her innocence and provided her with a convenient excuse for personal irresponsibility. We tell our children that they are potential drug users, and then when they live up to their potential, we shake our heads, hold out our hands, and ask for more money so that we can send the same message to more children more often.

Meanwhile, down in Jonesboro, a town grieving over an evil act can look forward to a trial that will provide them with no sense of closure, since the 13-year-old killer has realized that his rage and its consequences were not his fault. He has "recovered"—no doubt under the guidance of a counselor—a memory of sexual abuse while in daycare seven years ago. Now he is just as much a victim as the schoolmates he murdered.

—*Scott P. Richert*

"THE POOR you always have with you" is a law that the best efforts of all the king's social workers have failed to revoke. The most ambitious welfare scheme to date may be the Comprehensive Child Development Program (CCDP), a research project involving some 4,000 households across the country. After nearly a decade and 300 million tax dollars, the project is an utter failure.

The CCDP is not exactly a household acronym. The Department of Health and Human Services' Administration on Children, Youth, and Families, which has run the program since 1989, has made little effort to publicize it, and with good reason: the results do nothing to enhance the reputation of the social work trade. On the contrary, social work's most sacred cow, "case management," has been slaughtered by the nine-year program.

In "case management," a social worker guides a household (almost always a single-mother household) toward the wealth of services offered by the modern welfare state: everything from medical care to Food Stamps to "parenting" classes to "job training" to government-subsidized housing. It's a mystery why anyone would conclude that helping people help themselves to handouts is a recipe for getting them on the right track. Nevertheless, case management has been the *modus operandi* of the social work industry for decades.

But for almost as long, the evidence has mounted that case management does not scare off any of the demons it purports to exorcise: poverty, illiteracy, drug abuse, etc. In fact, the authors of the executive summary of the final report on the CCDP (available on the web at www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/rde) cite as failed case-management models the federal Even Start Family Literacy Program (kids in the control group saw their test scores go up, too), and the Army's Fort Bragg Child and Adolescent Mental Health Demonstration, an $80 million "substance abuse" prevention program that showed "no positive effects on a wide range of child-level outcome measures" compared with children in the control group.

Nevertheless, CCDP was to be the

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mother of all case-management tests. Staffed and planned by a "who's who" of social work, "it is the largest test of the currently popular model of case management." And it came at the highest price: "the total cost of CCDP averaged $15,768 per family per year . . . or about $47,000 for each family in the evaluation, given an average length of participation of more than three years." (Head Start, by comparison, costs roughly $4,500 per family per year.)

What happened when the best and brightest of the social work world were assembled and given more money than ever to devise and test a scheme to help "extremely at-risk low-income young children and families"?

"Exactly the same changes observed in CCDP families occurred in control group families." The bottom line: over 4,000 low-income households received the special attention of a social worker and roughly $16,000 a year in benefits and services *above and beyond what they had been able to obtain for themselves* (subsidized housing, food stamps, Medicaid), and at the end of three years they had nothing to show for it. While it's true that "children's vocabulary and achievement scores" increased over time in CCDP families, "vocabulary and achievement scores increased for children in the control group just as they did for children in CCDP."

Clients of the welfare state do not need to be tutored on how to exploit government programs. After all, the welfare riders who collect checks in Wisconsin and return on the same bus to Chicago have demonstrated their resourcefulness. The authors of the CCDP evaluation wonder whether "the case-management model is an ineffective approach," but there is no sign that other welfare bureaucrats are willing to learn the lesson.

There is one form of case management that does work. Dorothy Day proposed it: let everyone go out and find his own private pauper. Don't expect the Department of Health and Human Services or its Administration on Children, Youth, and Families to endorse Day's plan. If they did, Donna Shalala might have to find a real job.

—Christopher Check

BLACKS are moving back to the South by the thousands. This is not supposed to happen, not if you trust the mythology of the mainstream media. How can this be? Affluent black families leaving Chicago to go back home to Mississippi, back to the land of church burnings and redneck sheriffs?

But according to a study by the Population Reference Bureau, this is exactly what is happening. In the first half of the 90's, the Northeast lost 233,600 black residents, the Midwest lost 106,500, and the West lost 28,700. This reverses a trend that has prevailed since World War I. And the migration back to the South includes professionals and the affluent—a fifth of returning blacks are college graduates.

It would seem the times have changed. The day is long gone when all racial problems could be confined to the South, and a righteous nation could make a pretense of solving them by offering correction and coercion to backward Southerners. It should be obvious to anyone who travels the country today that there is much less racial tension and much more good will between the races throughout most of the South than there is in any big liberal Northern city. And it should not be surprising that blacks feel inclined to return to where nearly all have their roots.

My Southern hometown was the scene of major protests and riots during the civil rights era. Today, things seem peaceful and prosperous. Except in one respect, where things have changed for the worse in a way that hurts white and black Southerners both. Thanks to the criminal irresponsibility of our ruling elite, we now have a huge and growing Hispanic underclass as well as Vietnamese and Iranian gangs. I can remember when the biggest conflict was between the Baptists and the Methodists.

—Clyde Wilson

John Lukacs, *The Passing of the Modern Age* (Harper & Row). Includes a masterful discussion of the perils and pitfalls of foreign policy in a democratic (and increasingly bureaucratic) age.

Robert A. Taft, *A Foreign Policy for Americans* (Doubleday). In the early years of the Cold War, the Senator from Ohio presented an alternative battle plan, based upon preserving American liberty rather than fighting communism.

Russell Kirk and James McClellan, *The Political Principles of Robert A. Taft* (Fleet Press). The classic political biography of Mr. Republican.

Patton. Memorable 1970 movie in which George C. Scott exclaims, "This is what happens when Americans stop thinking like Americans and begin thinking like Allies."

EPICYCLES:

• Don't You Dare Feel My Pain: As President Clinton, touring Africa in March, geared up for his apology-that-wasn't-an-apology for **slavery**, Reuters reported that Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni found the whole thing ridiculous. "I don't have time for that diversion or rubbish," Museveni stated. "African chiefs were the ones waging war on each other and capturing their own people and selling them. If anyone should apologize it should be the African chiefs. We still have those traitors here today."

• And They're Off: With the next **New Hampshire primary** two years away, Democratic and Republican presidential candidates are busy jockeying for position. First out the gate on the Democratic side was Dick Gephardt, who, in a previous run for the presidency, renounced his long-held opposition to abortion. Now, fresh off a victory

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against fast-track approval of future trade treaties, Gephardt has switched colors again: in a speech to the Council on Foreign Relations in March, Gephardt argued that he was "misunderstood and misrepresented" as an isolationist and a protectionist. According to the *New York Times*, he assured the CFR that he is a "progressive internationalist," and that he supports the Clinton administration's request for $18 billion in new funding for the International Monetary Fund. Gephardt's misstep left only one candidate in either party who is willing to run the race against the free-traders: Pat Buchanan.

• Get Big or Get Out: In recent years, as Borders, Barnes & Noble, and other mega-chain bookstores have expanded into mid-size markets, **independent bookstores**—at least those that didn't immediately throw in the towel—have found that publishers and distributors were less interested in dealing with them. For some time, there have been rumors that the mega-chains receive preferential treatment—and cheaper prices. Now, the American Booksellers Association hopes to prove those rumors true. In March, they filed an antitrust lawsuit against Barnes & Noble and Borders. According to the Associated Press, Avin Mark Domnitz, executive director of the ABA, argued that the lawsuit is a struggle for "the existence of independent booksellers." Look for the cappucino-sipping lovers of liberty to denounce the lawsuit, and to rally to the defense of the economic imperialists.

• Hands Across Yugoslavia: Former pop idol **Cat Stevens**, who gave up singing when he converted to Islam 21 years ago, has relented and released his first CD, *I Have No Cannons That Roar*. Its 11 tracks are performed by Stevens (who now goes by the name Yusuf Islam) and Bosnian Muslims. The proceeds will be sent to charities ministering to Muslims in Bosnia. Judging by the tracks, however, this is no anti-war album. The title song was written by the Irfan Ljubijankic, foreign minister for the Bosnian Muslims, who was killed when his helicopter was shot down by a Serbian rocket. Sung by Bosnian Muslim Dino Merlin, the track includes the words, "I'll surrender you to no one else, my mother Bosnia, my love."

OBITER DICTA: Randolphians (and fellow travelers), start making your plans. The Ninth Annual Meeting of the John Randolph Club will be held in Dallas, September 18-20. Watch this space for more details.

Chronicles contributor **Janet Scott Barlow** has launched a website featuring her commentary on current events. Entitled "Out Here: Commentary from Middle America on Politics and Culture," the site can be accessed at *www.Out-Here.org*.

The poetry of **Emanuel di Pasquale** returns to our pages this month. His work has appeared in the *American Poetry Review*, *The Nation*, the *Christian Science Monitor*, and the *Sewanee Review*, and has been collected in a volume entitled *Genesis*. We are also pleased to reprint **Rudolph Schirmer**'s "Stanzas in the Valley of the Fallen." This poem, engraved on a bronze plaque, was presented to the Basilica of Santa Cruz del Valle de los Caídos, the great monument to all who died in the Spanish Civil War. Mr. Schirmer also presented a copy of the poem to Pope Paul VI at a special audience. In accepting the poem, the Pontiff told Schirmer, "I shall pray for your poem and for peace."

Our art this month flows from the creative hands of **Igor Kopelnitsky**, a Russian artist living in Brooklyn. Since coming to the United States in 1990, Mr. Kopelnitsky has illustrated for the *New York Times*, the *Daily News*, and the *Washington Post*, as well as for *Chronicles*.

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Igor Kopelnitsky

Put Out More Flags

by Thomas Fleming

Do I contradict myself?
Very well then I contradict myself.
(I am large, I contain multitudes.)

Illyria Americana

Walt Whitman was a bad poet, but he might have made an excellent American statesman, something like an effeminate Madeleine Albright, who can switch from one basic principle to the next with a duplicity that even the dewy-eyed fairy godmother of the battlefield would have admired. In the course of a day, she can be lecturing the Republika Srpska of Bosnia on the rights of Muslim and Croat minorities; then, without batting a reptilian eye, she can champion the right of the Albanian majority in Kosovo to gain autonomy, which will inevitably entail the right to expel (or exterminate) the Serb minority that has clung to its ancient land in the face of over half a millennium of persecution and ethnic cleansing.

Perhaps in their hearts, many statesmen are really bad poets: they prefer lies to truth and rely on poetic license as an excuse for incompetence and incoherence. I have been trying to figure out American foreign policy in the Balkans for six years, and the best I can come up with is that we are hostage to special interests—the Croatian and Albanian lobbies obviously, Arab oil interests, and (strange as it seems) the Israelis, who have found a way of doing something to please the Muslims. The United States and Israel, in other words, are making the Serbs pay the price for what we are doing to Muslims in the Middle East.

But even bribery and cowardice do not fully explain the zeal of the American foreign policy establishment and the media it controls. Their minds are already formed in globalist categories to see nationalism, Christian piety, and attachment to tradition as the last vestiges of a savage old world that must be rooted out, no matter what the cost, and although the Albanians and Croats are, each in their own way, as atavistic as their Serbian neighbors, it is the Serbs who have historically been predominant in the region, and it is the Serbs who sing the loudest songs about their heritage and their destiny. The globalist elites hate the Serbs for the same reason that they hate all real Americans who wish to preserve their traditions, their religion, their identity. This point was rammed home to me on the SFOR base in Sarajevo, where American soldier-girls lugged their lard-bellies, huffing and puffing, up the steps to the cafeteria—an oasis of bad cooking—where the bulletin boards featured (on paper of U.N. blue) advertisements for Black History Month.

The Balkans were heating up again early this year: riots in Kosovo followed by a Yugoslav crackdown followed by an American crackdown, renewed talk of Montenegrin independence, Bosnian Muslim threats over the postponed Brcko decision. By March, Boris Yeltsin's intoxicated hints about World War III breaking out over Iraq seemed more likely to be realized in Europe.

In tripartite Bosnia, the Muslims are no longer content with the cards they were dealt in the Dayton Accords: so far, they have been disappointed in the expectation that a liberal interpretation of the agreement would improve their hand. The Republika Srpska remains divided between the old warlords of Pale, who exploited their political ineptitude—they never devised a tax system, much less a strategy for victory—as an excuse for massive corruption, and the democratically elected government of President Biljana Plavsic, a staunch Serb patriot whose

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sense of justice and integrity has been misinterpreted as proof that she is a Quisling who would betray her country to the United States.

Kosovo is, for the moment, an even more serious question. We saw last year what Albanians can do to each other if they are allowed to go on a rampage (to say nothing of the crime waves Albanian immigrants have inflicted on Europe and the United States), and this violence is nothing compared to what they will do, with a little air support from their American friends, when the Shiptar begin to riot in Macedonia and Greece.

Meanwhile, the Hungarians of Serbian Vojvodina are clamoring for their autonomy, and their cousins in Slovakia are pressuring the Slovak government to demand autonomy for *Kosóva* (notice how many American journalists, by the way, are adopting the Albanian pronunciation of a purely Slavic word—from *kos*, blackbird—that means nothing in Albanian). The Slovaks, who have had the chance to bear the gentle yoke of imperial Hungary, are quick to understand that the call for a greater Albania being heard in Kosovo (and echoed by Albanian spokesmen in the United States like former congressman Joseph DioGuardi) will soon reverberate in harmony with demands for a Greater Hungary that will include parts of Serbia, Romania, and Slovakia.

Belgrade

Caught in a three-way bind—Albanians, Hungarians, and the American-backed *jihad* in Bosnia—the Serbs see the handwriting on the wall, and the letters are not Cyrillic. The mood in Belgrade is deep depression. No gypsy bands play in the streets, no one sings patriotic songs in the cafes. The gray buildings seem silent—"bare ruin'd choirs, where no birds sing." Since the United States quashed the demonstrations last year by reaffirming its support for Milosevic, people do not know where to turn.

Srdja Trifkovic arranged a dinner in Belgrade with Serb intellectuals, and over a first course of bull's testicles and Vranac (a Montenegrin red wine), Dragomir Acovic (architect, Rotarian, and royalist) observed with a cheerful gloominess that the Serbs "are dying as a nation and dying as a people." Acovic, a man of affable wit and vast erudition, must also know that quite apart from his nation he belongs to a dying breed of civilized men who will never fit into the New World Order. He has good reason for despair: the "ex"-communists still hold his family's property, and he knows that more than one of the so-called opposition leaders is willing to sell out to Milosevic.

When I point out the parallel with the mood in 1865 of defeated Southerners, who thought that God was punishing them for their lack of faith, Dusan Batakovic (research director of the Institute for Balkan Studies) quips, "I always sided with the losers in America—Indians and Southerners." Such sympathy is natural for Serbs who have been subjugated by Turks, Hungarians, Austrians, Germans, and Americans, and whose great national myth is their failure to defeat the Turks at the battle of Kosovo in 1389.

The general pessimism is shared by Dr. Vojslav Kostunica, leader of the Democratic Party, virtually the only major political party that has preserved its reputation for integrity. Kostunica takes a gloomy view of Serbia's political future, and his prediction that one or another of Milosevic's opponents will lead his party into the government is fulfilled within two weeks.

Serbian politics is complicated by the rioting in Kosovo. Imagine the situation in the United States if Mexican immigrants became a majority in Texas and, aided and abetted by Mexico, plotted a violent insurrection. When police arrest one of the terrorist leaders, the insurgents riot in San Antonio, and when the governor calls in the National Guard, the international community threatens sanctions.

The editor, Dragomir Acovic, Dusan Batakovic, and Ronald Hatchett.

The Mexicans—or rather, to drop the analogy, the Albanians—are pursuing a two-tier strategy. They insist they are open to dialogue, but the only question they are willing to discuss is the timetable for independence. The crackdown, although completely justified from the standpoint of law and order, was a bad move, as Kostunica points out, since it had the effect of reversing the progress Serbia had been making in the international community.

Milosevic, who lost the Krajina and bargained away Sarajevo, is now in a position to lose the ancient heartland of the Serbs, and Kostunica ruefully concludes: "One always hopes that Milosevic will learn from his mistakes, but one is always disappointed." Asked if the leader may be conspiring with the Americans—as it sometimes appears—Kostunica points out that Milosevic simply cannot afford to pay the price. The loss of Kosovo will be a greater blow to his government than even the debacle in the Krajina, where U.S. military intervention paved the way for a Croatian offensive that expelled whatever Serb civilians managed to escape. Milosevic's rise to power began when he took up the cause of the downtrodden Kosovo Serbs, and because the Albanians refuse to vote, he can count on 35 "cheap" deputies elected by Serbs who are naturally loyal to their champion. The career that began in Kosovo may end there as well. Still, despite Albright's threats, Slobodan Milosevic's shelf-life has not yet expired.

Banja Luka

Turning to the Bosnian question, Kostunica has deep reservations about the government of Biljana Plavsic, who may not be strong enough to stand up to both her domestic rivals (who control the World Bank's purse strings and can even impose their own choice of ambassadors). The problems in Bosnia, he says, are moral landmines.

Just getting to Banja Luka can be a problem, since the international bureaucrats, as part of their effort to divide the Serbs

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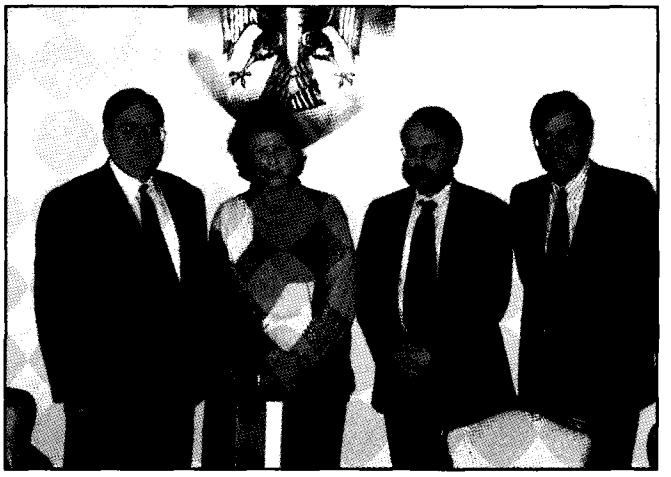
and construct a multi-ethnic Bosnia, now insist upon a visa for foreign travelers entering the Republika Srpska from Yugoslavia. Like most of the Republika Srpska (RS), Banja Luka is swollen with refugees, and the city has 70 percent unemployment. Streets at mid-day are thronged by able-bodied men of all ages, who ought to be at work.



Ronald Hatchett, President Plavsic, Thomas Fleming, and Srdja Trifkovic.

I came here with Srdja Trifkovic and Professor Ronald Hatchett (retired Air Force colonel and former disarmament negotiator) primarily to speak with Biljana Plavsic. I hoped she would give us an hour; in the end it was more like seven.

Mrs. Plavsic had been a professor of microbiology at the University of Sarajevo before the troubles in Bosnia broke out. In 1990 she became an SDS (Serbian Democratic Party) deputy for Banja Luka. Later, as vice president, she was known for her fish-or-cut-bait position, telling her colleagues that they either had to win the war as quickly as possible or sign the best deal the West was willing to give. In the end, after the Americans bombed their military and civilian infrastructure to pieces—killing many civilians who were foolish enough to live near bridges—they had to accept a worse deal than, for example, the Vance-Owen plan.

After the Dayton agreement, Karadzic's ally, Momcilo Krajsnik, was chosen to represent the Serbs in the three-man presidency of Bosnia, and Mrs. Plavsic was given the apparently lesser post of president of the RS. She took over a government with no taxation, no customs, an empty treasury, while the allies of Karadzic and Krajsnik were getting rich on bribery and corruption. Gangsters are usually willing to protect their investment, and there are rumors that there is something funny about the suicide of Vice President Nikola Koljevic (interviewed in the August 1995 issue of *Chronicles*), an honest man who was writing his memoirs. Koljevic's decline and fall could be the subject of a postmodern tragedy: a scholar and idealist who saw all his noble dreams corrupted by men he trusted, a Shakespeare scholar who, as Sir Alfred Sherman observed, never understood Macbeth. Still, even for a melancholic scholar who had read Hamlet once too often, two bullets in the brain does seem excessive.

Democratically elected in 1996 as the leader of the newly formed Serbian National Party, Mrs. Plavsic brings a hard-headed pragmatism to her job as president, and even American officials have had to acknowledge that her government is a far cry from the comic opera proceedings of the Pale regime. Intelligent and principled, she has a mischievous sense of humor that she puts to good use in sticky situations. Arguing a point with the stubborn Klaus Kinckel, she told the German foreign minister, "You must be a Serb—only a Serb could be so hard-headed," an oblique reference to so-called Lusatian Serbs in Germany.

She is, nonetheless, in a difficult position, having to deal not only with enemies in the Croat-Muslim federation and her former colleagues in Pale, but also with the hard-line regime of Slobodan Milosevic, who fears that the success of a democratic Republika Srpska will send the wrong signal to Serbs in Serbia and Montenegro.

As we speak, Mrs. Plavsic is waiting for the decision on Brcko, a town originally allocated to the Serbs but still the subject of dispute. She does not think that, in the context of European union, a small Bosnian-Serb state is an absurdity. "A small compact Bosnian Serbia might thrive," she says, "so long as it resists the imperial temptation. Pale's mini-imperialism was fatalistic and destructive." Her description conjures up a vision of a Serbian Slovenia, and she does not reject the comparison.

The Bosnian Serbs must learn to content themselves with half a loaf and stick closely to the letter of the Dayton Accords, without either cheating or surrendering their rights. "Let the Muslims and Croats cheat," she says, "We shall be faithful." But when an American diplomat (Richard Kornblum) came to her office and told her that she had to go beyond the letter and fulfill the "spirit of Dayton," she replied with some heat that she did not believe in spirits or ghosts (the word is the same in Serbian) but would stick by the sanctity of contracts. I try to explain to her that the American diplomat is a leftist who is simply echoing the activist American judges who find laws in the spirit of the Constitution and the penumbra of the Bill of Rights.

Of herself, Biljana Plavsic says she has always been a patriot, not a nationalist, but she wonders if Americans will understand the distinction. When she asks us why Americans refuse to understand the Serbs' problems in Bosnia, Ron Hatchett repeats to her what he heard from policymakers in Washington: "There are only ten million Serbs in the world, as opposed to one billion Muslims, who produce huge quantities of oil and offer vast markets for American business." Almost indignantly she asks, "But why don't they understand that we are ten million Christians?" And I try to explain that America, so far as its leadership is concerned, is a post-Christian nation.

It is hard for foreigners, who have always heard of America as one of the last Christian nations, to understand the animosity of our ruling class against the faith. A cynic might say that the real purpose of American education (and journalism and entertainment) is the de-Christianization of the people.

Of course, Orthodox Serbs are all too well aware of the communists' persecution of the faith, and at a lecture in Montenegro, I am asked if the New World Order is a plot of the Freemasons. Another questioner, an Orthodox monk who edits a theological journal, wants to know if America's anti-Christian bias goes back to the Civil War, when the New England deists and Unitarians conquered the trinitarian South. Shaking hands with me on the way out, Hieromonk Jovan Culibrk intones a few bars of "The Night They Drove Old Dixie Down." After returning to the United States, I read an article of his in

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which he compares Robert E. Lee with Prince Lazar (the doomed hero of Kosovo) and the tragic leader of Chetnik resistance in World War II, Draza Mihajlovic.

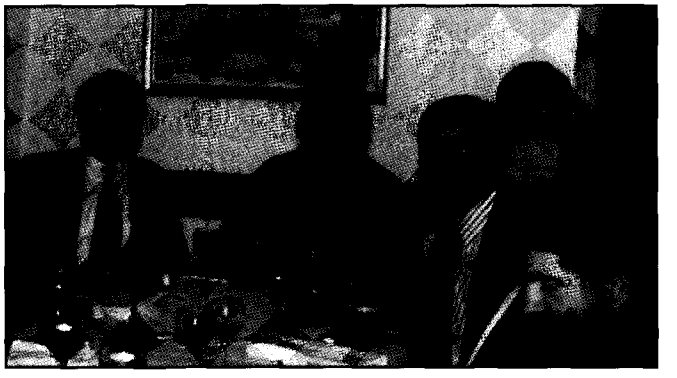
Montenegro is a strange paradox, an all or nothing land where atheist communists fought with religious zeal against the church, and yet today the Orthodox metropolitan archbishop may be the most widely respected man in the country. The metropolitan was kind enough to give us most of a day, and wherever we went, people came up to show him respect—political leaders, businessmen, railway employees, street peddlers, college professors.

In fact, the surprising thing about Serb intellectuals is the number of them that are openly Christian. Biljana Plavsic, although a scientist, wears a cross around her neck, and on the walls of her office I count several religious images. Our conversation is interrupted by the message that the Brcko decision has been postponed. According to the announcement, the decision would have gone against the Serbs, except for the progress Plavsic's government has made in acknowledging the rights of Croats and Muslims. Although it is obviously blackmail, Plavsic is unconcerned, convinced, as she is, that the Serbs' very survival depends on their strict compliance with Dayton. In fact, there are 18 non-Serbs among the 183 deputies in the RS parliament—a sharp contrast with the absence of Serbs in the other two legislatures.

Of course, the pressure is very one-sided. The next day Hatchett and I agree to go to Sarajevo to chat with the American ambassador about the situation. Ambassador Kauzlarich is an amiable man, who speaks highly of Mrs. Plavsic and acknowledges the tight spot she is in. Still, he complains, she ought to be flying the new Bosnian flag designed by the International High Representative, who apparently has too much time on his hands. The Westendorp flag is a cheerful Hallmark logo designed to offend nobody, inspire nobody. We point out that in our drive through the Croatian sections of the Federation, only the Croatian flag was displayed. In Sarajevo, of course, the Bosnian flag is acceptable because it represents Izetbegovic's dream of a Muslim-dominated Bosnia, but in Croatian-held Bosnia, in the hilltop fortress over the ancient town of Jajce for example, the Ustasha checkerboard was flapping in the breeze. Jajce had been a mixed community, but Serbs without U.N. license plates would make a mistake if they stopped to take a peek at their former homes. Kauzlarich, an American of Croatian descent, persisted: "But the flag does fly in the Federation and not in the Republika Srpska." In other words, nationalist Croats get credit for being liberal and accommodating, because they cannot prevent their Muslim allies from flying the Westendorp flag, but the Serbs' failure to display the flag is a sign of intransigent nationalism.

There was nothing to be gained by antagonizing the ambassador. I did not even bother to point out that cars with Muslim and Croat license plates were common in the RS, while we were told—by U.N. representatives—that it was very unwise to enter the Federation with RS plates. What could happen? They could grill us for a few hours at an improvised checkpoint. Or they could let the air out of our tires. Or, if they had grounds for suspicion, they could make life even less pleasant for us. How unpleasant? In the four-hour drive back to Banja Luka, we must have seen nearly a dozen ruined Orthodox churches, most of them destroyed after the fighting was over. Some of the ruins have spray-painted graffiti celebrating the Croatian massacre of Serbs in the Krajina.

The next day we go to Mrkonjic Grad, a town named after the *nom de guerre* assumed by Peter Karadgeordgevic, in his guerrilla days before he was made King Peter I. We drive past a ruined hotel. I ask the security officer who is escorting us if the Croats did this when they withdrew. "Yes," he says, "but the hotel was owned and operated by Croats. The army wouldn't let them stay; in fact, they rounded up most of the Croats in the area, put their furniture in trucks, and took them into Croatia."



The editor, Metropolitan Amphilochius, Ronald Hatchett, Srdja Trifkovic, Prof. Bogoljub Sijakovic, and our guide Father Luke.

"The Croats are funny like that," he explains. "In Banja Luka, the Croats are always asking me why we let the Muslims stay. 'They stink of mutton fat. If we were in charge, we'd get rid of the lot of them.'"

In Mrkonjic Grad, the mayor takes us to the cemetery and shows us a mass grave which had contained a very few soldiers and many old people (now reburied after Orthodox funerals). When the Croatian army came in, the Serbs evacuated, and only 500 or so stayed behind. So far the townspeople have found 277 bodies of victims taken from their homes and "executed" by the army. It is a gray and windy Sunday, and the sloping graveyard is full of new graves and mourning relatives. I hardly notice when the mayor, a former high school teacher, stops to pat a monument and turns to hide his tears. Later we are told that the grave held his best friend from the army.

When international observers came to attend the opening of the mass grave at Mrkonjic Grad, the Serbs hoped that at last some recognition would be given to their victims, but it was not to be. As soon as the international humanitarians realized what the trench contained, they folded their tents and went away. One bitter particle of truth can upset the stomach of a man who has fed himself only on lies.

All poets are liars, Plato and Nietzsche claimed, and bad poets—humanitarians, statesmen, and journalists—tell the most banal lies. If a fact—or a human being—stands up to contradict them, then that fact or that human being must be eliminated. A dead Serb is like an honest Jew, a tolerant Southerner, or a hardworking black—a contradiction in terms that must be simplified, erased from the press release, stuck in a camp, or kept on welfare.

The Serbs are always and only killers, never victims, in the minds of the international observers who are writing political odes to celebrate the flag of multi-ethnic Bosnia flying merrily in the humanitarian breeze that blows through Jajce, symbolic proof that Bosnia really is one nation. That is, after all, their dream: one nation, one leader, one god—and Mohammed is his prophet. c

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The New American Century

Searching for Foes in the Post-Cold War Era

by Doug Bandow

Igor Kopelnitsky

Despite the President's and Congress's promises, the budget is unlikely to be balanced in the year 2002. The bulk of the promised spending cuts come after the year 2000, and future Congresses and Presidents are unlikely to be any more willing than present ones to make tough political decisions.

Equally problematic is the fact that both parties continue to protect large segments of the budget, like defense, from serious reductions. Over the next five years, military expenditures will fall, but only in real terms, as budget increases are held below inflation. Even this "cut" was approved only grudgingly, as both parties have competed to restore previous reductions.

However, military outlays should be an obvious target for budget-cutters in the coming years. Defense spending does not exist in a vacuum; it is the price of our foreign policy. When the United States faced the threat of hegemonic communism—an aggressive Soviet Union aided by client states worldwide—it chose the policy of containment, which required a large military, numerous alliances, scores of bases, and an advanced force presence around the globe. All told, Washington spent more than $13 trillion (in today's dollars) to win the Cold War.

But in 1989, all the assumptions underlying American foreign policy collapsed. The Central and Eastern European states overthrew communism, the Berlin Wall fell, the Warsaw Pact dissolved, and the Soviet Union disappeared. A military strategy and force structure designed to deter Soviet aggression was suddenly obsolete; the United States faced no adversary worthy of the name.

Military spending did not change accordingly, however. True, outlays have fallen, but only from the 1985 peak, up 55 percent from 1980, caused by the Reagan defense buildup. At roughly $270 billion, military outlays in 1997 remained above the level of 1980, even in inflation-adjusted terms. Indeed, President Clinton is spending more than Richard Nixon spent in 1975 and almost as much as Lyndon Johnson spent in 1965 during the height of the Cold War. Outlays are running at 85 percent of the Cold War average, *without* a Cold War. Washington accounts for a larger share of the globe's military expenditures today than it did a decade ago, when it faced a hostile hegemonic threat.

But this is not enough for many policymakers. Conservatives led by Republican pundit William Kristol, former drug czar William Bennett, Family Research Council President Gary Bauer, potential presidential candidates Steve Forbes and Dan Quayle, and neoconservative journalist Norman Podhoretz have formed the Project for the New American Century. The organization is dedicated to promoting what Kristol characterizes as "benevolent hegemony." As he argues, "we need to increase defense spending significantly if we are to carry out our global responsibilities," namely, imposing order around the globe. Kristol advocates an annual increase of $60 to $80 bil-

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Doug Bandow is a Senior Fellow at the Cato Institute and a former Special Assistant to President Reagan. He is the author, most recently, of Tripwire: Korea and U.S. Foreign Policy in a Changed World *(Cato).*

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lion. Groups like the Heritage Foundation are only slightly less extreme; the latter proposes a hike of $20 to $25 billion a year. House Speaker Newt Gingrich has proposed no specific number, but recently urged the Budget Committee to increase the military's budget significantly. According to Gingrich, "We have lived off the Reagan buildup about as long as we can. The fact is that our defense structure is getting weaker, our equipment is getting obsolete, and our troops are stretched too thin." Similarly, *National Review* calls for "reversing the decline in our defense budget."

President Clinton, as is his wont, has arrayed himself as a pale version of his critics. Last year he asked Congress to hike military spending. The administration boasted that for "the fifth time in four years . . . the President increased defense spending above previously planned levels." Not surprisingly, one anonymous Pentagon official told the *New York Times* that "the Defense Department has fared well in the budget deliberations."

The Pentagon recently finished its quadrennial defense review. Naturally, the Department advocated the warmed-over status quo. Defense Secretary William Cohen proposed preserving the current force structure, slightly paring manpower levels, and allowing inflation slowly to erode overall expenditures. He envisions no change in strategy, with the Defense Department remaining committed to fighting two wars almost simultaneously. It is as if the Cold War never ended.

There is little serious partisan disagreement on this score. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright has been consciously building GOP support for administration policies. As she puts it, "Both parties are led by people who understand the importance of American leadership." The administration even considered enlisting former Republican presidential nominee Robert Dole to promote its plans for NATO expansion and an extended stay in the Balkans.

What is the justification for a potentially huge military buildup? Some advocates contend that America is in danger of becoming a second-rate military power vulnerable to attack. Marine Commandant Charles Krulak speaks of a continuing "national demobilization." During his campaign, Dole warned that "peace is threatened and dark forces are multiplying in almost every corner of the globe. All of us have seen how an enemy can rise suddenly and strike quickly when America seems unprepared." Columnist Harry Summers argues that if the United States does not have "military forces deployed around the world," Americans will find the enemy "at our throats." The Pentagon's two-war strategy, explains Secretary Cohen, "signals our resolve to friends and foes alike."

Where, however, are these foes? Today the United States dominates the globe, accounting for over a third of its military outlays. Washington presides virtually without enemies. America and its friends account for about 80 percent of the world's military spending. States with civil (if at times uncomfortable) relations with the United States, particularly China and Russia, account for the bulk of the rest. Even former Defense Department official Zalmay Khalilzad admits: "the U.S. is without peer. We face no global rival or a significant hostile alliance. Indeed, the world's most powerful and developed countries are our friends and allies. In modern times, no single nation has held such a predominant position as the United States does at present."

Yet in a world so very different from that of the Cold War, Washington spends even more compared to its allies and potential adversaries than before. American military outlays are more than thrice those of Moscow, nearly twice those of Britain, France, Germany, and Japan combined, and eight times those of China. As a share of Gross Domestic Product, American military expenditures are four times those of Japan, and two or more times those of most of its European allies. American citizens spend more to defend South Korea than do the South Koreans. America's interests in the world are great, but the United States does not have more at stake in Europe than do the Europeans, or have a greater interest in the independence of South Korea than do the South Koreans. There is something very wrong with this picture.

Of course, as House National Security Committee Chairman Floyd Spence observes, "It's still a dangerous world." It is not particularly dangerous for America, however. As Colin Powell noted when he was chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, "I'm running out of demons. . . . I'm down to Castro and Kim Il Sung." The impoverished communist dictatorships of Cuba and North Korea may be ugly, but neither threatens American security. The mere fact that a conflict may break out somewhere in the world does not mean that it would be in Washington's interest to intervene, or that America's friends could not look after themselves.

The largest component of the Pentagon budget is devoted to traditional alliances such as NATO. In Europe, 100,000 American soldiers stand guard lest phantom Soviet divisions roll West. While the future direction of Russia remains unclear, the Western Europeans, with a combined population of 414 million and GDP of $7.4 trillion compared to 149 million and $1.1 trillion, respectively, for Moscow, are eminently capable of defending themselves. Britain and France possess an independent nuclear deterrent. Together they, along with Germany, spend 25 percent more on the military than does Russia, which has just announced a further cut in defense outlays. It is time for the Europeans to take over NATO.

American-backed expansion into Central Europe makes even less sense than continued support for the Western Europeans. While the former communist satellites should be integrated into the West, the best means to do so is economically through the European Union. These struggling nations need access to Western markets, not the presence of Western soldiers. Yet the Western Europeans continue to dawdle, preferring to offer American military subsidies rather than risk increased European economic competition.

Moreover, America has no vital interest that warrants guaranteeing the borders of Poland, Hungary, Rumania, the Baltic states, Ukraine, and whoever else ends up on a NATO wish list. These nations obviously matter more to Western Europe, and that means Western Europe should defend them. The Western European Union, EuroCorps, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and even an America-less NATO all provide potential frameworks for a European-organized, -funded, and -manned defense of the East.

But lack of national interest is obviously no bar to American military intervention. Although Europe looks secure, NATO officials peer south as well as east, and see only trouble. Many alliance planners say that the greatest risks of conflict lie south of Europe. Explains Adm. T. Joseph Lopez, commander of NATO's Southern Command (AFSOUTH): "The next war could grow out of any number of explosive factors—economic difficulties, water shortages, religious fanaticism, immigration,

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you name it. There are many different forces of instability in the southern region." Naturally, he believes Washington must intervene, explaining that "I can think of no foreign theater more critical for the United States. We have to stay engaged, with a robust force and the political will to use it." Indeed, he advocates "engagement across the line," since that strategy is what won the Cold War. Of course, acknowledges Lopez, "instability is a difficult enemy to deal with."

> Is there no country over which America is unwilling to go to war? The answer, unfortunately, appears to be no.

Well, yes, as Washington is discovering in Bosnia. The United States is already deeply enmeshed in the Balkans, a region with no serious link to American security. Despite the ongoing Western occupation, there is little support among any of the three hate-filled ethnic groups for preserving the artificial Bosnian state, a utopian goal of no practical value to America or even Europe. Nevertheless, Washington is now using its military to support one nationalist politician over another in Serbian Bosnia. It turns out that the kind of democracy Washington is intent on bringing to the Balkans—by seizing television and radio stations when it disapproves of their broadcasts and transferring control of police stations to factions it views as more pliant—is more representative of Boss Tweed than George Washington. But good policy does not seem to be the goal. As the *Weekly Standard* explains: "We need to make it clear, not just to Bosnians but to the world, that it's much safer to be our friend than our enemy." Perhaps we should just begin bombing.

These sort of arguments about U.S. leadership, routinely made by advocates of a Pax Americana, are just plain silly. Leadership requires acting even when those on whose behalf one claims to be acting do not think the issue is important enough to act? That is the conduct of a sucker, not a leader. And what foes and what commitments are at stake? If Washington does not try to rebuild a Muslim-dominated Bosnia, then what? Would China attack Taiwan, North Korea attack South Korea, Russia invade Germany? It would have been an exercise in real leadership to ignore the Europeans' attempt at blackmail—threatening to remove their forces if President Clinton had tried to fulfill his original commitment to bring American troops home by July. He should have kept his promise, telling the Europeans to do as they wish.

But meddling in Bosnia is not enough. Violent unrest in Kosovo, a Yugoslav province largely populated by ethnic Albanians, has generated calls for intervention. The United States is "not going to stand by and watch" Yugoslavia crush political freedom in Kosovo, thundered Secretary of State Albright. Albright pushed for economic sanctions and an arms embargo. She is a moderate, however. The Balkan Institute proposes "threatening U.S. military intervention to halt provocative violence by Belgrade." Janusz Bugajski of the Center for Strategic and International Studies advocates declaring the province to be a NATO protectorate and launching air strikes against Yugoslav military targets.

Certainly, one can argue that Yugoslavia should provide political rights to Albanians in Kosovo. But it is a dictatorship that does not give full political rights to Serbs. In any event, the issue is not humanitarian. Washington cares not one whit about ethnic self-determination when it come to Serbs dominated by Croats and Muslims, or Kurds brutalized by Turks.

Unfortunately, Bosnia is only the start, at least if current Washington policymakers have their way. Adm. Lopez says, "If you take a macro-look at our theater, it's literally filled with instability and pockets of unrest." Examples include Albania, Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey, Libya, the Middle East, Syria, and Zaire. "With the end of the Cold War, the new enemy is instability, and it is manifested in this region more than in any other place in the world," Lopez argues. "Our business and our mission is to maintain stability."

This is apparently why the United States has been aiding the militaries of Kazakstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan, areas never before thought to be of great strategic interest. Washington has been providing military aid to Uzbekistan; it has also established the United States-Uzbekistan Joint Commission to study military and political cooperation.

Moreover, in 1996 the United States conducted military exercises in the region. Explained Marine Gen. Jack Sheehan, commander of the U.S. Atlantic Command, if the U.N. ever authorizes a "peace support operation"—whatever that is—in the Central Asian nations, "then the United States is ready to stand beside them and participate." To this cheery thought, he added: "There is no nation on the face of the earth that we cannot get to." He did not explain, however, why the United States would want to get to such distant, impoverished nations, which border on Afghanistan, China, and Russia.

AFSOUTH is also advocating a "Mediterranean Initiative" that promotes military contacts with Egypt, Jordan, Mauritania, Morocco, and Tunisia. But Adm. Lopez wants more, much more—to expand the so-called Partnership for Peace, the precursor to NATO expansion into Central Europe, to such nations. And the Sixth Fleet has been conducting training exercises throughout West Africa. "I believe there's a need to make new friends," says Lopez, "so that NATO and the United States are viewed in a positive, rather than threatening, way." In other words, NATO will become a big Peace Corps, only with nuclear weapons.

Is there no country over which America is unwilling to go to war? The answer, unfortunately, appears to be no. NATO officials suggest that "out-of-area" actions may become the alliance's primary focus in the future. For what conceivable purpose? Capt. Ken Golden, commander of an Amphibious Readiness Group attached to the Sixth Fleet, says "While a lot of Americans back home seem to think we don't have enemies anymore, I can tell you there's a lot of hatred out there. The world as we see it out here is a very unsettling and unstable place." Yes, but our enemies—such as Cuba and North Korea—are simply pathetic. And most of the hatred would not be directed at the United States if Washington did not meddle in

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all sorts of faraway, irrelevant conflicts.

The case for maintaining 100,000 soldiers in East Asia is equally dubious. South Korea has 24 times the GDP and twice the population of North Korea. The former is a dominant trading nation, produces a wealth of hi-tech products, and has stolen away almost all of its adversaries' allies. The latter is impoverished, isolated, and incapable of feeding itself. It is as if the United States were dependent on outside support to deter Mexican aggression.

Similarly, a military presence imposed on Japan when it was a distrusted and war-torn former military dictatorship remains today, even though Japan is now the second-ranking economic power on earth and has peacefully attained most of its World War II goal of a Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. It was one thing to borrow money from Japan to defend Japan when Tokyo faced a potentially aggressive Soviet Union and was incapable of defending itself. It is quite another to do so when the threats against Japan have greatly diminished and Tokyo's defense capabilities have greatly increased.

And no replacement threats loom on the horizon. China is growing, but it seems assertive rather than aggressive, and its military expansion has so far been minor. Japan and the other East Asian states are capable of maintaining a sufficient military deterrent, and that will not change for many years. China remains poor and underdeveloped despite its recent explosive economic growth.

Germany and Japan are still feared by some neighbors, but neither has a double dose of original sin, and both are unlikely to attack powerful neighbors, many of whom possess nuclear weapons. Brazil, India, and other nations may eventually evolve into regional powers, but the United States has no reason to treat them as enemies and plenty of time to respond if they become hostile. Outlaw states like Iraq and North Korea pose local conventional threats that should be contained by their neighbors, not the United States. The problem of nuclear proliferation is more complex, but not easily resolvable through conventional military means by Washington.

The administration found this to be the case with Iraq. The President was never able to articulate a serious purpose for a winter war in the Gulf. Defense Secretary William Cohen, who promised "substantial" strikes, admitted that they would neither drive Saddam Hussein from power nor stop his attempt to create weapons of mass destruction. They might not even have caused Hussein to agree to further inspections. And yet the United States remains prepared, should Hussein again resist U.N. authority, to risk military action, kill innocent civilians, foul relations with allied states, and inflame potential terrorists.

The Hussein regime is one of the more ugly to dot the globe, but it is hardly alone. It is not even the only unpleasant dictatorship attempting to build biological, chemical, or nuclear weapons. Every time the United States threatens such regimes with war, it only strengthens their desire for such weapons to deter future American military action.

While Iraq has no capacity to respond militarily, sober Washington policymakers should realize that the United States remains at risk to terrorism which, as the bombing of the World Trade Center demonstrated, is the poor man's form of retaliation. Washington needs to negotiate an end to sanctions on Iraq and, along with allied states, rely on normal military means to deter Iraqi use of any weapons that it might acquire. America obviously faces no danger, while Israel already possesses an adequate deterrent. And the Gulf states, if they feel threatened, can cooperate with such nations as Turkey, and build militaries capable of doing more than arresting domestic critics.

The globe remains an uncertain place, and new threats could arise over the long-term. But that does not require Washington to attempt to micromanage a world that will always be unsettled. Secretary of State Albright says of her interventionist views: "My mind-set is Munich." There was only one Hitler, however, and Europe's circumstances during the 1930's were unique. Thus, the United States need not confront militarily every nation with which it has a disagreement. Rather, Washington should remain wary and watchful, prepared to play the role of distant balancer should a potential hegemonic threat arise that cannot be contained by friendly states. America will be better able to meet genuine future threats if it does not exhaust itself attempting to maintain an hegemony, benevolent or not, that is sure to be resisted by many friends as well as foes.

Another mission is trying to rebuild failed societies, which could also absorb significant military forces. In fact, it already has. As John Hillen, a Fellow for National Security at the Council on Foreign Relations, puts it, "the United States has had difficulty saying no to almost any call for military action in the past five years," undertaking some 50 different military missions all over the world. And there could be even more demands for American intervention in the future. Today some 30 Third World brushfires are raging. National Security Advisor Sandy Berger talks of using American power as "the decisive force for peace in the world." Senator Richard Lugar, one of the GOP's leading foreign policy spokesmen, argues that "we have an unparalleled opportunity to manage the world."

But Somalia vividly demonstrated how difficult it is for officials in Washington to reach inside and manipulate other societies, let alone to resolve ancient hatreds and political divisions. America's military pressure helped halt the fighting in the Balkans, but only after allowing the very partition that Washington had long resisted. Moreover, American involvement has simply suppressed regional antagonisms, not resolved them.

Nor is there any reason to try to fix broken states. That tragedy abounds in a world so full of opportunity is perhaps the great anomaly of our age. But failing to recognize the inherent limitation on the ability of Washington to "manage" other countries ensures that officials will only compound the tragedy elsewhere by sacrificing the lives of Americans as well.

Of course, some analysts seem unconcerned about the prospect of risking the lives of American servicemen for any number of dubious purposes. Then-U.N. Ambassador Albright asked Colin Powell, "What's the point in having this superb military that you're always talking about if we can't use it?" That's easy to say if one doesn't have any family members or friends in the military. But as Powell retorted, GIs are "not toy soldiers to be moved around on some kind of global game board." The American people obviously agree, given their reaction to the disaster in Somalia. This has led to criticism by some foreign policy elites. Writes Thomas Friedman of the *New York Times*, "We can't lead if we don't put our own people at risk." But real leadership does not mean sacrificing soldiers' lives for interests irrelevant to their own political community.

Even in distant wars with some plausible security implications, like the Balkans, other nations, in this case those of Europe, have far more at stake than does the United States.

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Moreover, non-intervention offers the surest method to contain such conflicts. Alliances proved to be transmission belts of war in World War I, drawing ever more peripheral powers into a conflict that proved disastrous for every one of them. In contrast, the same nations erected firebreaks to war when fighting broke out in Yugoslavia in 1991. Thus, the conflict burned longer than World War I without spreading.

The final refuge of those who support big military budgets is "leadership." Republican presidential nominee Bob Dole made that undefined term his 1996 campaign mantra. Vice President Al Gore matched Dole by telling the 1996 Veterans of Foreign Wars convention that "America must act and lead." House Speaker Newt Gingrich makes much the same pitch: "You do not need today's defense budget to defend the United States. You need today's defense budget to lead the world." Secretary of State Madeleine Albright says that America must "accept responsibility and lead." William Kristol's Project for the New American Century proclaims: "We cannot safely avoid the responsibilities of global leadership."

There is virtually no limit to the responsibilities entailed by this popular goal. "At times," declares Joshua Muravchik of the American Enterprise Institute, the United States "must be the policeman or head of the posse—at others, the mediator, teacher, or benefactor. In short, America must accept the role of world leader." Zalmay Khalilzad cites as responsibilities of leadership preparing for such contingencies as tension in the Balkans, a China-Taiwan confrontation, and "an internal conflict in a key regional state," presumably meaning involvement in a civil war. This attitude even leads to support for intervention simply to demonstrate leadership. Former Secretary of State Warren Christopher called Bosnia "an acid test of American leadership." Having gotten involved, the United States naturally cannot leave without fulfilling its goals—in order to demonstrate leadership. Richard Holbrooke, who negotiated the unrealistic agreement for an artificial, polyglot Bosnian state, declares that "failure is unthinkable. We cannot afford to fail."

However, the United States has the largest and most productive economy on earth. It is the leading trading nation. The American constitutional system has proved to be one of the world's more durable. American culture—like it or not—permeates the globe. An oversized military is not required for "leadership."

Anyway, even significant budget cuts would leave Washington with the world's largest and most advanced military, far stronger than that of any other state or coalition of states. And those cuts would allow the economy, America's most important source of influence, to grow faster. Today, Washington's disproportionate military burden does more than divert precious economic resources down wasteful channels. It simultaneously relieves America's industrialized competitors from spending more on their militaries. This has allowed Japan and Europe, in particular, to gain an edge they otherwise would not have. Not surprisingly, such international dependents want to keep their generous U.S. subsidies: both Germany's Helmut Kohl and France's Jacques Chirac have shamelessly demanded a continued American military presence in Europe while cutting back on their own defense.

There are alternatives to America's unilateral hegemony. In some areas, regional security organizations, like the Western European Union or an America-less NATO in Europe, could keep the peace. Another option is informal spheres of influence, where interested local powers help maintain stability in their own regions—essentially America's strategy in Central America. Finally, a rough balance of power may generally constrain potentially aggressive powers; such a system could evolve in both East Asia and the Middle East if the United States reduced its dominant presence.

No one wants America to be weak or vulnerable to potential enemies, which is why defense spending on training and technology should remain priorities. This is also why policymakers should beware turning the military into something else, either through social experimentation, such as the feminization of training and standards, or involvement in humanitarian missions. Of the latter, warns a recent Foreign Policy Research Institute task force, "U.S. forces engage in the politics, ambiguities and complexities of 'peacefighting,' often at the expense of their 'war-fighting' skills and training."

In fact, the Pentagon has expressed concern about a deterioration in individual aggressiveness, fighting skills, and weapons maintenance after interventions like Somalia and Haiti. Repeated military deployments for strategic marginalia have also lowered morale and cut retention. As a result, former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff John Shalikashvilli worries that American forces "will take more casualties" in a real war, the sort of serious contingency which the military was originally established to meet.

We need to match forces to missions, and to do so we must reconsider strategies made obsolete by a changing world. Zalmay Khalilzad worries that the collapse of the Soviet Union, "the common enemy that helped bring" America's disparate alliances together, creates the danger "that these alliances will weaken and eventually collapse." But the disappearance of the threat that animated such military organizations *should* lead to their disappearance, at least as originally formed. The United States should adjust its force structure for a post-Cold War world by shifting defense responsibilities onto allies and eliminating units currently dedicated to those tasks. Doing so would allow a radical restructuring—from, for instance, 1.5 million to 900,000 servicemen, 12 to 6 aircraft carrier battle groups, 20 to 10 Air Force tactical air wings, and 10 to 6 Army divisions. The military budget could be cut to some $170 billion, down from nearly $270 billion today.

Congress would even find a political benefit in doing so. Medicare and Social Security costs will explode during the next decade: Congress will have to choose between subsidies for America's elderly and subsidies for foreign allies. And there is no doubt where the public stands. Although Joshua Muravchik complains that the media "has given the American people a very distorted picture of our military effort" by suggesting that defense outlays are too high, it is really the politicians seeking higher military outlays who are misleading the American people. Polls find rising support for sizable cuts in military outlays when voters find out how much the United States actually spends compared to its allies and potential adversaries.

The federal budget will never be balanced unless Congress and the President make some tough choices, including cutting military outlays. Washington spends far more than is necessary to protect America and its vital interests around the world. In the absence of a threatening global hegemon, the United States should again become a normal nation, with a normal military.

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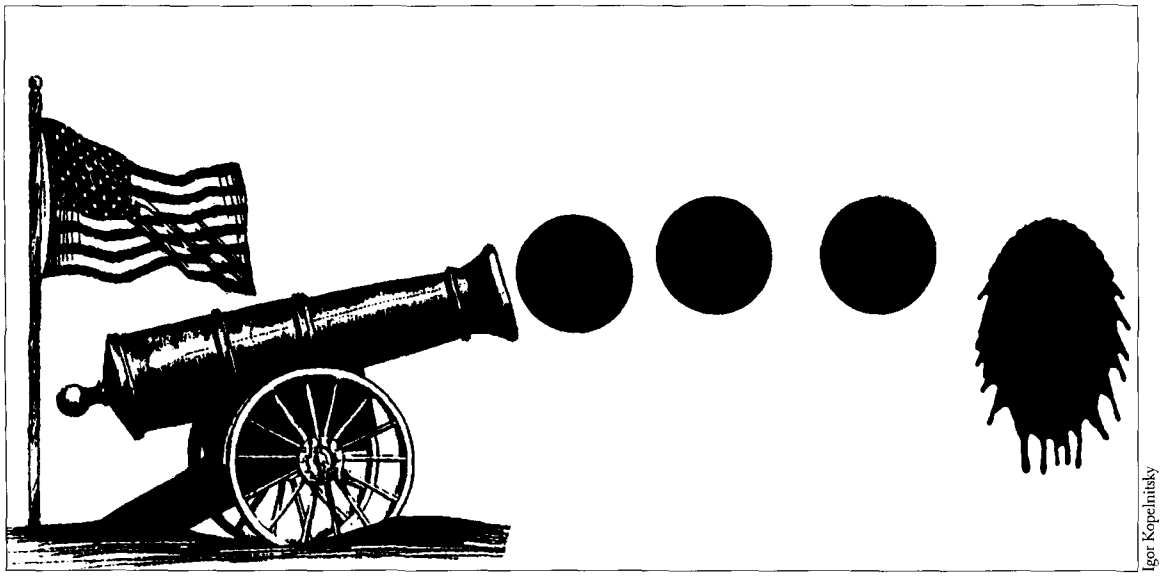
Rainbow Fascism at Home and Abroad

by James George Jatras



Igor Kopelnitsky

Some years ago, when I was a consular officer in the once-notorious border city of Tijuana, I spent a few days in Mexico City on my way back from a temporary assignment in Matamoros, another border town just across the Rio Grande from Brownsville, Texas. At a social function, I was cornered by a typically irate group of young Mexican intellectuals, who proceeded to lecture me on the evils of my country, in particular the manner in which (they claimed) we brutalize Mexican illegals caught crossing into the United States. After a few minutes of the standard exposition—genocide, racism, imperialism, and so forth—I posed a question: "In light of all your complaints about us, why do you Mexicans treat Guatemalans caught crossing your southern border the way *you* do?"—it being common knowledge that beatings, torture, rape, and even murder are prevalent.

My interrogators were astounded—then enraged. With a mixture of wounded pride and arrogance, they stormed back at me: "But, it's not the same thing—they have violated the laws of *la patria*!" The fatherland. *Their* fatherland. It was evidently clear to them, as Mexicans, that their fatherland was something as dear to them as the word implies. It was equally inconceivable to them that I, an American, might feel about my own country the way they felt about Mexico (maybe because, in their experience, Americans typically do not seem to have such feelings, at least the kind of Americans they would have occasion to know). After all, how can a *norteamericano* have a *patria*? For them, and for the rest of the world, the United States is not the unique home of a particular people—it is more like a natural resource. Everyone has a right to it.

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La patria. La patrie. Das Vaterland. Otyechyestvo. For most nations, the fatherland is an obvious fact, like their own father and mother, like the air they breathe. In contrast, it seems that for Americans (and for that matter, all other English-speaking peoples) "fatherland" is a foreign-sounding word that applies to other countries, never to our own. We talk about our country in terms of ideals, principles, maybe traditions, even Founding Fathers, and we might be "patriots"—but we have no fatherland. We are explicitly told that American identity—the "American Creed" even—has nothing to do with "nationality" in the traditional understanding of the concept, much less with the related idea of "ethnicity." We talk as if there is no people, no nation (as opposed to ideological identity), no family (as the Greek *patria* is translated in the authorized version of Ephesians 3:15) for which America is home. Instead, we seem determined to turn our country into a boarding house, where each visitor—come one, come all—stays as long as he likes and takes what he will but owes no deeper loyalty.

This attitude affects our relationship with the rest of the world and our inability to base a policy on national interests. "Efforts to define national interest presuppose agreement on the nature of the country whose interests are to be defined," writes Samuel P. Huntington in the September/October 1997 issue of *Foreign Affairs*. "National interest derives from national identity. We have to know who we are before we can know what our interests are." Citing the "disintegrative" effects of non-European immigration in recent years and an increasingly intolerant cultural diversity, Huntington warns: "Without a sure sense of national identity, Americans have become unable to define their national interests, and as a result subnational commercial interests and transnational and non-national ethnic interests have come to dominate foreign policy."

In short, the negation of American national identity—which,

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in the domestic sphere, we see in Bill Clinton's gleeful projection of a non-European ethnic majority in the next century, America as a scene out of *Blade Runner*—dominates our relations abroad as well. Our anti-national, pseudo-intellectual elites are not content just with destroying the American nation; they want to eliminate everybody else's national identity too. The budding totalitarianism inherent in the domestic concept of group rights based on "diversity"—race, ethnicity, language, religion, sex, age, economic class, handicap, sexual preference, and so on (the breeding of the new and improved American "rainbow" analogue to *Homo Sovieticus*)—needs little elaboration. Of course, the means employed—open trade and immigration, federalized education and health care, gun control and the inversion of traditional morality, feminization of the military and more federal, state, and local criminalization of "hate crimes"—may, in the long run, prove as destructive to some of the currently favored groups as it is to the traditional American identity that is being broken down: *E pluribus nullum*.

> The question of nationality (and its accompaniment, self-determination), has become putty in the hands of the global elite.

The same impulse operates in the international sphere, in which the denationalized "new" United States is rapidly becoming both enforcer and prototype for a new global order. Last November the *Washington Post*, a publication that is anything but hostile to globalization, ran an article entitled "Even Allies Resent U.S. Dominance: America Accused of Bullying World." The *Post* quotes the German newsmagazine *Der Spiegel*:

> Never before in modern history has a country dominated the earth so totally as the United States does today. American idols and icons are shaping the world from Katmandu to Kinshasa, from Cairo to Caracas. Globalization wears a "Made in USA" label. The Americans are acting, in the absence of limits put to them by anybody or anything, as if they own a blank check in their "McWorld."

Of course, not all foreigners object to "McWorld." As one commentator in Germany put it: "American values and arrangements are most closely in tune with the new *Zeitgeist*. . . . And that makes for a universal culture with universal appeal."

Several years ago, Strobe Talbott, Bill Clinton's Oxford housemate and now Deputy Secretary of State, wrote an essay for *Time* entitled "America Abroad: The Birth of the Global Nation." In it, he expresses his prediction—and his hope, which he is now in a position to help realize—that in the next century "nationhood as we know it will be obsolete; all states will recognize a single, global authority. A phrase briefly fashionable in the mid-20th century—'citizen of the world'—will have assumed real meaning by the end of the 21st" (and if Talbott gets his way, a lot sooner than that). The established consensus, differing only in details between the Talbott/Madeleine Albright internationalist left and the "national greatness" pseudo-conservatism of the *Weekly Standard*, ensures that for the foreseeable future American "benevolent global hegemony" (the *Standard*'s expression), in symbiosis with the United Nations, will be the order of the day. As I have outlined previously in *Chronicles*, this impulse is a continuation of those of the pretenders to global domination that were born in the First World War and figured so prominently in the Second. The 20th century has been the century primarily of red fascism and briefly of brown fascism. The 21st begins as the era of rainbow fascism, stamped "Made in USA," an America none of the Founding Fathers—with the possible exception of Tom Paine—would recognize, much less countenance.

What is a nation? The following can serve as a useful working proposition from the pen of a man who had some experience with nations (mainly with destroying them). Iosif Vissarionovich Dzhugashvili, better known as Stalin, wrote:

> A nation is an historically formed community of people (but one neither racial nor tribal), possessing a common territory, a common language, and a commonly shared economic life, a community of psychological outlook which is manifested in a community of culture.

Not too bad for a guy who dropped out of the seminary to become a bank robber, although one might quarrel with the part about "neither racial nor tribal," since indeed most nations come into being precisely as organic extensions of the family, the clan, and the tribe.

In the American context, this was obvious to John Jay, who noted in *Federalist* 2 that America was

> one connected country, . . . one united people, a people descended from the same ancestors, speaking the same language, professing the same religion, attached to the same principles of government, very similar in their manners and customs.

Indeed, to Jay it was self-evident that, contrary to the prevailing delusion that national culture is irrelevant to national creed, "the creed," as Huntington puts it, is "a product of the culture."

Huntington suggests that "the values and institutions of the original [American] settlers, who were Northern Europeans, primarily British, and Christian, primarily Protestant," were "modified but not fundamentally altered" by later waves of Western, Southern, and Eastern European immigration. Still, we all instinctively recognize that there is something more characteristically "American" about that original stock: it has long been possible to be an "ethnic" or "hyphenated American" who was also Italian, Greek, Polish, Jewish, or Irish. But an American cannot be "English" or an "English-American" unless he himself actually is from England. (The seldom-encountered "French-American" would sound almost as silly.) According to the "American Creed," it is heresy to admit what we all know to be true: that on a certain level, those of us who

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are hyphenated are not as unambiguously "American" as those who have no other ethnic identity.

In general, nations are built in part through the suppression or absorption of competing national, regional, tribal, or religious identities. The relatively late unifications of Germany and Italy illustrate the extent to which the result is sometimes little more than a set of conventions. For example, we all acknowledge that a Bavarian is a German, along with, say, a Prussian, with whom (according to John Jay's criteria of ancestry, language, religion, customs, etc.) the Bavarian has far less in common than he does with an Austrian. But an Austrian, as we all know, is not a German, never has been a German, and is not allowed even to think about possibly being a German. By the same token, a Sardinian or a (German-speaking) South Tyrolian is an Italian, but a Corsican or a (German-speaking) Alsatian is a Frenchman. A Rhinelander who speaks Plattdeutsch or Niederdeutsch at home is a German, but someone a few miles away, where the almost identical speech is the state language, is a Dutchman or maybe a Fleming (which is to say, a Belgian).

Interestingly, suppressed nationality seems to translate at times into nationalist attachment to the suppressing power. The most obvious example is the American South, which, after its forcible reincorporation into the Union became, and by most accounts remains today, the most nationalist region of the country. The same might be said of the Scottish Highlanders, who, within decades of Culloden and the genocidal Highland Clearances, became an indispensable element in the growth of a minor island kingdom into a worldwide empire. (Oddly enough, the Lowlanders, who mostly are ethnic Teutons rather than Celts and who have always been English-speaking, today are devotees of the sacred moor and seem to have forgotten entirely on whose side the bulk of their ancestors fought in the Forty-Five.)

To sum up, the concept of nationhood, though deeply rooted in immutable ancestral origins as well as historical experience, is at the same time subject to ex post facto interpretation, which lends not only a certain flexibility but even, in the wrong hands, a dangerous malleability.

How does this observation apply to the behavior of the dominant globalist elite? A quick glance at any historical atlas reveals that, prior to 1945, hardly a decade passed without significant shifts in European borders. (We do not even need to talk about the ridiculous lines on the map of Africa.) The post-World War II ossification of territorial arrangements should be seen as an anomaly occasioned by an unusual circumstance, the Cold War division of Europe. The first meaningful postwar shift in borders occurred in 1990 with the reunification of Germany, ending a division that mirrored that of the continent as a whole. In short order followed the dissolution of Yugoslavia, the Soviet Union, and Czechoslovakia.

Two seemingly contradictory trends are taking place simultaneously: on the one hand, the resurgence of nationalisms that a century ago would have been thought long dead—Scottish, Welsh, Breton, Cornish, Basque, Catalan, Flemish, Walloon, Corsican, Moldovan, Abkhazi, Gagauz—and, on the other hand, European integration. Indeed, it is striking that in most cases the resurgent sub-nationalisms, in asserting their independence from the states of which they had been a part, often for centuries, do not seem to have much interest in attacking the larger trend of transnational integration. Nor do the globalist elites in Washington or at Turtle Bay seem unduly dismayed by these resurgences. One is struck, for example, by how easily Bill Clinton's Europhile clone, Tony Blair, accepts what only a few years ago would have been unthinkable: a Scottish parliament, even the devolution of Wales. The fact is, today it matters little whether the nominal capital of Scotland is Edinburgh or London, or if Northern Italy claims to be governed from Milan or Rome, because in any case the real power will be in Brussels, if not in New York or Washington. The breakup of Czechoslovakia—the "velvet divorce" hailed as a model of peaceful democratic political change, though neither the Czechs nor the Slovaks nor the federation as a whole ever had an opportunity to vote on the question—boiled down to whether Germany would eat it up in one bite or two, with Prague becoming the proud new capital of *Das Bundesprotektorat von Böhmen und Mähren*, a hewer of wood and drawer of water for the economic hegemon of United Europe. (Not, by the way, the worst of fates.)

The rainbow fascist nexus is this: both secession and integration strike at the same enemy, the only entity with even a chance of defying the new globalism—the historic nation-state. That is why Strobe Talbott finds very exciting the "devolution of power not only upward toward supranational bodies and outward toward commonwealths and common markets but also downward toward freer, more autonomous units of administration that permit distinct societies to preserve their cultural identities and govern themselves as much as possible." The fact that virtually all nation-states today are clamoring to cede their sovereignty to global institutions is a commentary on the quality of their leadership. But if those states are broken up, losing in the process their military strength and their political institutions, their weak successors cannot possibly avoid integration into the new imperium. This is especially likely when we consider that most contemporary secessionist movements, such as the Scots National Party (not to mention La Raza in this country), are at least as far to the left as the national governments they hope to supplant, ensuring that the prospects for improved leadership are hardly promising.

The question of nationality (and its accompaniment, self-determination), has become putty in the hands of the global elite. Srdja Trifkovic has noted the international role in the breakup of Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union, which may be taken as cautionary examples. (Huntington observes: "If multiculturalism prevails and if the consensus on liberal democracy disintegrates"—if?—"the United States could join the Soviet Union on the ash heap of history.") Many people may still remember the 1946 book *I Chose Freedom*, the classic Cold War defector story by Victor Kravchenko. The author was an ethnic Ukrainian, which he obviously regarded as a certain type of Russian—his recollection of his early years is entitled "A Russian Childhood," and his grandfather's account of the 1878 Russo-Turkish war celebrates feats of Russian arms. Kravchenko recounts his dismay, during the official "Ukrainianization" program in the 1920's, at being forced to learn from textbooks written in the same Ukrainian speech he spoke at home, in lieu of the standard Russian texts to which he was accustomed, texts which he and his classmates had to consult on the sly. One might imagine someone in southern France being forced, for political reasons, to conduct formal business in Provençal instead of standard French, or of a Swiss German having to struggle through technical manuals in his native Allemannic dialect. The fact is, the distinction between a dialect and a

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language has long since become more a question of politics than of linguistics. In the Soviet Union, the idea of "Ukrainian" (and, even more absurdly, "Byelorussian") language and nationality was first encouraged because it was useful to Lenin and company to break up the Russian nation; and then, at the appropriate time, the parts were beaten into conformity with the artificial formula "national in form, socialist in content." In the post-communist era, rainbow fascism finds the dissolution of historic nationhood in the formerly communist world one accomplishment of Lenin, Stalin, and Tito that should not only be maintained but will, in Talbott's mind, set the stage for the final rejection of "tribalism" and the creation of a multinational global state. His claim that the United States is already a precursor of such a state points to a similar manipulation of ethnolinguistic identity; if yesterday Byelorussian turned out to be a national language, who is to say Ebonics will not be tomorrow?

Rainbow fascism is very fond of what someone has called the "Stone in the Garden of Eden" thesis. This is the notion that there was a flat rock lying around somewhere on Day Six of creation, with the 1998 borders of all the countries scratched on it, borders which are sacrosanct and enforceable by the United States. One odd thing about this idea—really, a rank superstition—is that it is subject to mindless, even arbitrary revision. If a recognized state—say, Yugoslavia or the Soviet Union—ceases to exist, then its former internal administrative lines become imbued with eternal Edenic inviolability. Federal states, in particular, seem to be susceptible to this now-you-see-it, now-you-don't standard. I expect that, in the not-too-distant future, certain states in the American Southwest, having been for decades little more than administrative appendages of Washington, will miraculously rediscover their sovereignty once they become officially Spanish-speaking.

There is one area in which Huntington is somewhat deficient: he correctly focuses on the minority ethnic and commercial skew to non-national American policy but does not really examine the deeper philosophical mandate inherent in globalization. We should bear in mind that rainbow fascism, like its red and brown kin, is above all an ideology, a malignant derivative of the moral corruption and demographic collapse of Christian civilization. Indeed, it might be more accurate to say that, in its messianic aspect, it is a sort of Christian heresy. With its predecessors, rainbow fascism shares a basically materialistic core combined with a flexibility and spiritual sensitivity that is far more subtle and seductive. If, in theological terms, communism was the temptation to change stones into bread, if national socialism was a genetic and materialistic perversion of the idea of the "peculiar people" elect of God, then rainbow fascism has an aspect of a materialized Pentecost run riot, from its seemingly endless ability to incorporate subordinate ideologies (New Age, environmentalism, feminism) to its claim to bestow complete freedom within "diversity." This "white noise" babble of a multitude of voices, each in its own distinctive way expressing the same vacuity, may indeed turn out to be the "end of history" prophesied by Francis Fukuyama. That the United States—responding to an ill-conceived summons to "national greatness"—would find itself the indispensable midwife for the birth of such a monster should be repugnant to any real patriot, to any true son of our fatherland. ©

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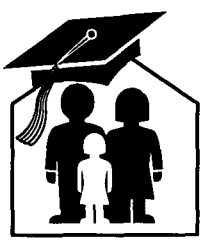

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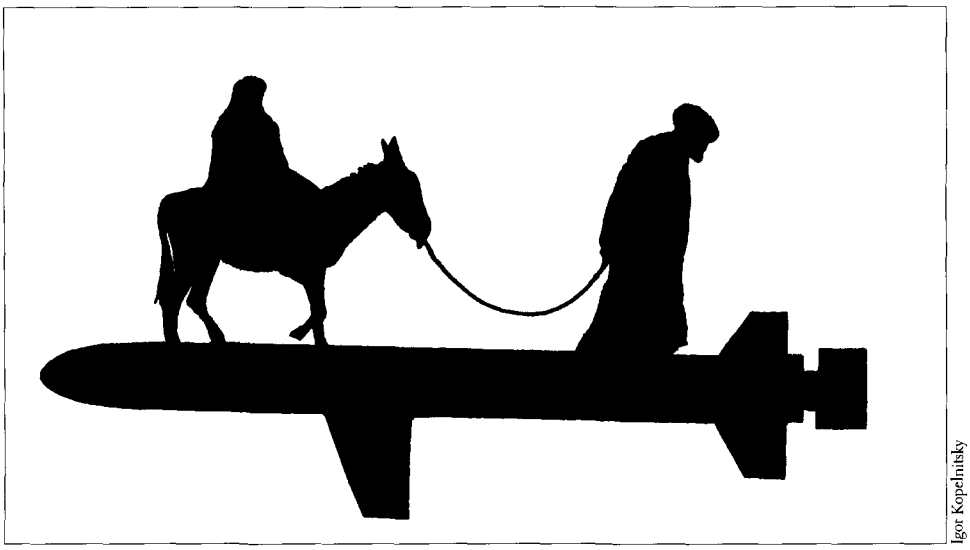
Wagging the Dog

Gulf War II, World War III

by Justin Raimondo



Igor Kopelnitsky

In the popular film *Wag the Dog*, an American President caught molesting a young girl seeks to divert attention away from the sex scandal: a mock "invasion" of Albania is staged, Hollywood-style, complete with faked film footage and bogus carnage. L'affaire Lewinsky debuted the same week, and federal officials—threatening military action against Iraq as news of presidential priapism hit the media—publicly scoffed at the idea that this may be a case of life imitating art. But privately—as even Clinton loyalists like Leon Panetta suggested the President may have to step down, and Washington's sharks smelled blood in the water—the confluence of art and reality must have given them pause. To have launched Gulf War II in that context would have been a public relations disaster. Better to wait a few weeks or even months: by that time, they figured, either Gore will be President or the whole affair will have blown over. In any event, the movie will soon be out of the theaters and out of the public consciousness, and perhaps then we can get on with the serious business of murdering the Iraqi people.

This has been an ongoing project of the United States government. While a military strike would be its crowning "success," the less cinematic form of mass murder carried out by American policymakers for the past seven years is not to be overlooked. Among the weapons in the arsenal of the modern warfare state, economic sanctions are perhaps the cruelest. American missiles can pulverize an entire neighborhood in a matter of moments, but the slow death of economic strangulation can destroy an entire people in a few years. According to the U.N.'s own reports, more than a million Iraqis have died as a direct result of the strictest sanctions ever imposed, 547,000 of them children. More than one-third of all Iraqi children are malnourished: 4,500 children under age five are dying each month from hunger and disease, a sixfold increase since the onset of this merciless embargo. Iraq was once a nation that was proud of its relative modernity and its thriving middle class; today, the country is reduced, by every measure of civilization, to the level of Subsaharan Africa. Fifty-three bishops of the U.S. Catholic Bishops' Conference have condemned the sanctions as immoral. As a measure of malice, the ban on the importation of books, as well as food and vital medical supplies, underscores the fact that the sanctions are aimed at the Iraqi people, and not just Saddam Hussein.

As the human consequences of the sanctions become widely known, the official rationale for U.S. policy—that the Iraqis possess and plan to use "weapons of mass destruction"—becomes grotesque. What is the result of these monstrous sanctions if not mass destruction?

As a form of discourse, war propaganda has a distinctive style: there is a boldness about it that leaps out at you, and not only denies but shamelessly inverts the truth. In their war on Ken Starr, the pronouncements of the Clintonistas have acquired this tone of militant mendacity, culminating in the President's own rendition of righteous anger: "I did not have sexual relations with *That Woman*," he announced, looking straight into the television cameras. The same brazen quality came out a week later when he faced those cameras and declared that Saddam "threatens the safety of his people, the stability of the region, and the security of all the rest of us." That it is Saddam, not the United States, which is threatening to pulverize Iraq and blithely estimating "collateral damage" (i.e., civilian deaths) in the thousands, is a lie believed by no one. That Saddam is a threat to his neighbors is directly contradicted by the refusal of even the most abject American satraps, such as the Saudis and tiny Bahrain, to let the United States use their territory to launch an attack. And as Arab hatred of Uncle Sam in-

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tensifies, and threatens to boil over into a general Mideast conflagration, it is fair to ask: Who is really endangering "the security of all the rest of us"?

The idea that the Iraqis "have the capacity to hit Tel Aviv" with chemical, biological, or even nuclear weapons, irresponsibly touted by U.N. disarmament overlord Richard Butler in a speech to a gathering in New York, is contradicted by the public statements of his predecessor, Rolf Ekeus. As head of the U.N. Special Commission on Iraq, Ekeus announced that Iraq no longer posed a military threat to its neighbors. "I do not think that Iraq could constitute a threat to the region," Ekeus told a news conference in the summer of 1995. Just back from a trip to Baghdad, he descried "a 180-degree change" in Iraqi compliance with U.N. demands for full disclosure of Iraq's military arsenal. At the same time, the International Atomic Energy Agency declared that "there is no possibility" that Iraq was developing nuclear weapons, and its spokesman announced that "there is a new atmosphere of transparency. We are satisfied that the information we received looks very credible."

As for chemical weapons, Iraq was given a clean bill of health by Israel's army chief, Major General Amnon Shahak, who told a parliamentary committee in 1995 that Iraq "no longer had chemical weapons," according to an Israeli official. "According to our estimates," said the official, "there are no longer chemical weapons in Iraq." Not only that, but Shahak also pronounced Iraq bereft of any missile delivery system of consequence.

What happened between the summer of 1995 and the winter of 1998 to make the Iraqis such a menace? We are asked to believe that, under the constraints of the embargo and the most intrusive and comprehensive industrial surveillance system ever instituted, Iraq managed not only to maintain but to expand its covert weapons program. Yet not one scintilla of evidence exists to support this conclusion.

In response to Iraqi compliance, the United States and Great Britain upped the ante: instead of lifting the deadly sanctions, the West tightened the screws and made more demands. The monitoring system set up by the U.N. was to be extended into Saddam's official residences, the infamous "presidential palaces," previously denounced by American officials as emblematic of the Iraqi dictator's hedonistic lifestyle: Saddam is building luxurious palaces, they said, while the Iraqi people are starving. As the propaganda campaign gathered steam, however, these symbols of Saddam the Sybarite began to take on a more sinister aspect: hidden in Saddam's many basements, we were told, are enough toxins to wipe out the world's population several times over!

The Iraqis even took Western reporters on a tour of these fabled palaces, stuffed to the rafters with ornate furniture, marble mosaics, and bronze statues of the Iraqi leader in a thousand heroic poses. Asked why the presidential sites were being opened to reporters but not to U.N. inspectors, Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz replied: "You are guests. You are not inspectors. Guests are allowed, inspectors are not allowed. Very simple."

The Iraqis make the charming argument that asking for access to these presidential sites would be like asking the U.S. to open up the White House or Camp David for inspection. This old-fashioned idea that the same standards apply everywhere to all nations and governments belongs to our republican past. Now that we are a full-fledged empire—a "global hegemon," as *Weekly Standard* editor William Kristol likes to put it—all acts of defiance, no matter how small, are acts of *lèse majesté*, and must be severely punished, lest others get ideas. Saddam won't open the doors of his harem to "weapons inspectors"? Let the bombing begin!

The most bizarre and ominous aspect of all this was the position taken by the Republican congressional leadership: both Trent Lott and Newt Gingrich declared that another bombing campaign would be futile and that Saddam must "somehow" be forced from power. What these two cagey politicians left carefully unsaid, but forcefully implied, is openly proclaimed by the "hegemonists" over at the *Weekly Standard*, where Robert Kagan, the neoconservative Clausewitz, bewails "Saddam's Impending Victory" and bemoans the fact that "air power is not enough to bring the Iraqis to their knees." Having assured us throughout the debate leading up to Gulf War I that air power would indeed be sufficient to make short work of Saddam, the interventionists have now turned on a dime—without, of course, acknowledging that any such turnabout has taken place. "Only ground forces can find and destroy weapons-production facilities with a high degree of confidence that they have been destroyed." Therefore, according to this loony logic, the United States must occupy every square inch of Iraqi territory. *New York Times* columnist William Safire has chimed in with the suggestion that an invasion ought to culminate in "teaching the Iraqis how to hold an election."

Such an election, amid smoldering ruins, was recently held in Bosnia, where Serbian nationalist radio and television stations were shut down by American troops and all opposition to the occupation was banned as "hate speech." This Pollyannish scenario ignores the history and culture of the region: Saddam may perish in the conflagration, but there will be other Saddams who will rise to take his place—a resurrection engineered by U.S. policymakers, who fail to appreciate the power and significance of martyrdom in the political culture of Islam.

Amid signs of a rapprochement with Iran—signaled by the advent of a Tocqueville-quoting Iranian President—the possibility of Gulf War II is ominous indeed. For what it promises is the dismemberment and division of Iraq, America's permanent occupation of the Iraqi oilfields, and a leap into a morass from which there will be no extrication.

Boris Yeltsin was vilified for daring to suggest that American actions in the Gulf could set off World War III. Anyone can see, however, that the end of the Cold War has not eliminated the danger of a third—and perhaps final—world war. In Iraq, three out of the four great civilizational powers intersect: Islam, the West, and a defeated and resentful Slavic empire. Saddam, as the leader of the Baathist or socialist tendency in the Arab world, fits in nowhere neatly: as a secularist modernizer, he is anathema to fundamentalists, who swear allegiance to Teheran. He is an intransigent nationalist, and thus the sworn enemy of the West. Only the Russians have shown any sympathy for the Iraqis, but Moscow is reduced to playing the role of mediator and cannot offer military protection: in any showdown with the United States and Britain, the Iraqis are on their own.

Saddam and the Iranian mullahs represent the two great tendencies competing for cultural and political dominance in the Arab world, one modernist and the other medievalist. The struggle broke out in open warfare during the Iran-Iraq war, which devastated both countries. The demonization of Sad-

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dam as "worse than Hitler," as George Bush put it, has obscured America's tilt toward Iran, now formalized by Iranian overtures and a warm, albeit cautious, American response. While American complicity in Iran's shipments of arms to Bosnian Muslims is well known, the arms-length embrace of the Iranian mullahs by the Clinton administration makes this alliance semi-official.

If Bill Kristol were to get his fondest wish, and an American invasion succeeded in planting the flag of "democracy" in Iraq, its domain would not extend far beyond Baghdad. The breakup of Iraq would likely lead to the creation of a separate Shiite Muslim "republic" in the south, aligned with Iran: this is the price of Iranian acquiescence. Saddam's demise would also almost certainly lead to the renewal of the ongoing struggle for a separate Kurdish nation in the north. The introduction of the Kurdish factor into the equation means that any conflict would spread to at least four other nations in the region—Turkey, Syria, Iran, and the former Soviet republic of Azerbaijan—all of which have substantial Kurdish minorities that long for political and cultural independence. As the U.S., Iran, and others face off over the Iraqi corpse, the image of vultures feasting is hard to escape.

Vultures are greedy, quarrelsome creatures, just as likely to turn on each other as they are to attack the weak and the dying. Yeltsin was right: in Iraq, all the ingredients of a global conflagration are in the mix, not only religion, nationalism, and the passions they invoke, but also the fate of Iraq's vast oil wealth, great pools of it bubbling beneath the scorched earth.

It is hopelessly naive to believe that the giant multinational corporations, which do a thriving business in the region, have failed to exert considerable influence over American policy. These same interests are well served by the advocates of outright invasion in both parties: American troops can seize Iraq's oil fields, but who will pump the oil out of them? A sure-fire method of identifying the source of a government policy or a political movement is to ask the key question: *Cui bono*? Who profits? War, and a propaganda campaign to support it, does not come out of nowhere. While Hillary Rodham Clinton is taken seriously when she blames "a vast right-wing conspiracy" for the sexual peccadilloes of her errant husband, the same rhetoric employed to describe the events leading up to a war is routinely dismissed as beyond the pale, and dangerous to boot.

Some Republicans, however, have bravely spoken out. Before the agreement was hashed out by U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan, Representative Steven E. Buyer of Indiana asked point blank: "Why are emotions running so high at the White House? Why are the tom-toms of war sounding?" Representative Ron Paul of Texas excoriated his jingoist colleagues for "trying to appease the military-industrial complex and appear tough for campaign ads." He complained that "once hostilities begin, debating the policy which created the mess is off-limits; the thinking goes that everybody must support the troops by blindly and dumbly supporting irrational and irresponsible policies." The only solution, he concludes, "is a pro-American constitutional policy of nonintervention." But "unfortunately, we cannot expect such common sense to prevail in the current political climate."

Paul's sentiments are correct, but his pessimism is unwarranted and shortsighted. As Patrick J. Buchanan put it, the use of ground troops would require a half-million soldiers in arms, and this means "cannibalizing U.S. forces around the world, calling up the reserves, and perhaps reinstituting the draft. We may soon see just how enthusiastic we really are about playing Globocop, if it comes to the serious shedding of American blood."

Pat Buchanan and the editors of this magazine, in alliance with other conservatives and libertarians, stood firm against the war hysteria that preceded Gulf War I. The next time around, with the stakes even higher, that same alliance has the potential to expand its ranks to include the overwhelming majority of Americans. If our rulers decide to scrap Kofi Annan's settlement with Saddam, they could unleash the dogs of war and ignite a social and political explosion that will make the 1960's seem relatively tranquil. c

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The Coward's Reward

by Emanuel di Pasquale

For every licked toe,
a slap in the face
in rooms hefty
as catacombs.
For every low moan,
a kick in the belly
under blankets heavy
as bank doors.

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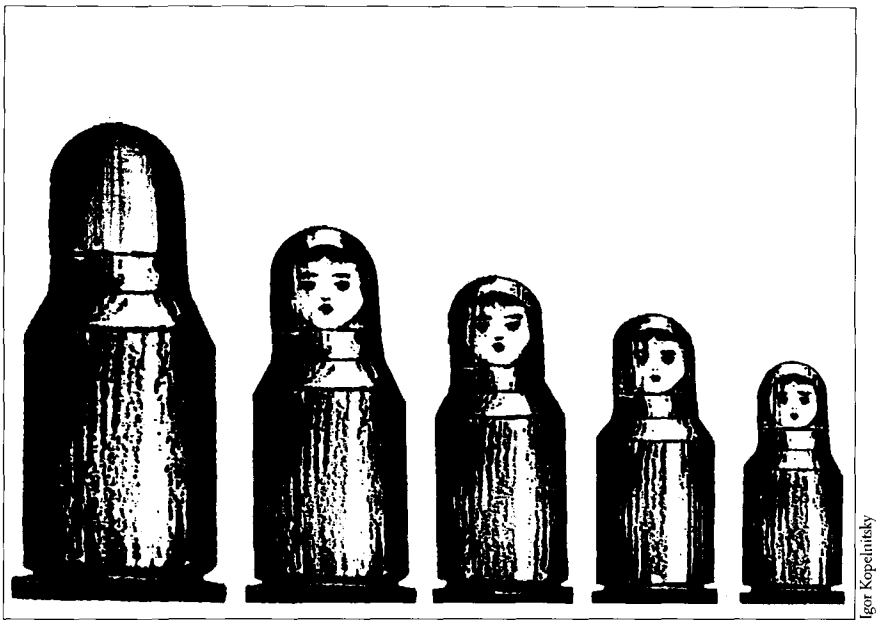
Rasputins at Home and Abroad

by Denis Petrov



Igor Kopelnitsky

Before his trip to Rome in February, Boris Yeltsin promised everyone who would listen that he would personally invite the Pope to visit Russia. Yeltsin frequently rattled on in front of reporters, like a football player still sprinting after he is out of bounds. For example, he claimed that the youngster Clinton was pushing the world toward World War III by threatening to bomb Iraq, a claim not even the most hard-line commie-nationalist Duma deputies had made, seeming to mix up in his obviously confused mind the threats themselves with vague apocalyptic visions of his country remaining a major player in the great game of nations. Sergei Yaztrzhembsky, his long suffering press secretary, frequently stepped in to explain what the president *really* meant (he *didn't* mean to say that Russia would launch a nuclear strike if the United States bombed Baghdad), dodging any questions about how Mr. Yeltsin is feeling or about who, if anybody, is in charge in the Kremlin. The Russian press began publishing Kremlin leaks about Yeltsin losing his grip, about the "Father of Russian democracy" working only a few hours a day if at all, and about how power had fallen into the hands of Yeltsin's ambitious daughter, Tatyana Dyachenko (named a presidential advisor last year), and Yeltsin's wife, Naina. Naina and Tatyana themselves are reputedly under the sway of a charismatic family advisor, a banker-media-oil magnate with a shady past, onetime Security Council Deputy Secretary, and unofficial Russian envoy to Chechnya—Boris Berezovsky (named by *Forbes* magazine as one of the world's richest men and portrayed in the same magazine in 1996 as the Godfather of the fused Russian Mafia-government-business structures).

Cut to Davos, Switzerland, in January of this year: the annual "World Economic Forum" at the Alpine ski resort was a conspiracy theorist's nightmare come true. Here, the rich and powerful from government, media, and big business gather to plan the next stage of globalization. George Soros hobnobs with William Safire, and European bigwigs mingle with Russian semi-gangster *predprinimateli* ("entrepreneurs"). Boris Berezovsky attracts the most attention of any member of the Russian contingent, as he has in recent years. Eclipsing his ally (then Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin, whom Yeltsin fired in March) as well as his enemies (First Deputy Prime Minister Anatoly Chubays and banking mogul Vladimir Potanin), Berezovsky basks in the glow of the media limelight. The forum is excited by rumors that Berezovsky intends to gather the Russian financial oligarchs for a conference on peace (since last summer, the oligarchs have been warring over the privatization of the remaining tasty morsels of the Russian economy) and on the future of Russia. Berezovsky himself declares that the oligarchy should unite ahead of the 1999 parliamentary elections and the 2000 presidential campaign as they did in 1996, when he forged a fleeting alliance behind Yeltsin's re-election and, with all the tools (both legal and illegal) available, saved Russia—and the oligarchic clans—from the communists. "We came," intones the banker-*cum*-kingmaker, "to rest and negotiate." He is clearly enjoying the role of international celebrity.

Unspoken, but clearly on the minds of the elites, was Yeltsin's obvious physical and mental deterioration (evidenced most dramatically at his meeting with Jacques Chirac and Helmut Kohl on March 26, when Kohl had to coach Yeltsin on what to do next) and its implications for the clans themselves. Without Yeltsin as a buffer, the clan chieftains might break their unwritten code and shed each other's blood. The possibility of Yeltsin's senility or, worse, his demise, had greatly concentrated the oligarchic mind. The old man's deterioration

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Denis Petrov frequently visits Russia and always reads Moskovsky Komsomolets.

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had raised the stakes of the intra-oligarchy clan feuds. True, assassination of lower-level "businessmen" or nosy journalists has become common enough—the spate of contract killings of Moscow "businessmen" in the last few years testifies to the ruthlessness of the Russian "sharks of capital"—but none wants open warfare. More worrisome was the murder last fall of St. Petersburg privatization chief Mikhail Manevich, a close friend of Chubays, shot by a rooftop sniper as he drove down one of St. Petersburg's main avenues. Did Berezovsky, overcome by hubris, certain of Yeltsin's continued backing, have Manevich killed as a last warning to Chubays and Potanin? After all, Berezovsky himself was the target of a failed contract hit a few years ago, before the rules of the game had been established. Nevertheless, even media outlets controlled by Berezovsky, which include the gigantic state TV network, ORT, appeared to concede that a lasting peace appears unlikely: Potanin and Chubays were not jumping on Berezovsky's bandwagon. The post-Davos line was that the Berezovsky-linked clans have tapped Chernomyrdin as Yeltsin's heir—for now, at least (Chernomyrdin's dismissal in March was interpreted by some as a sign that Berezovsky had freed his ally from the burden of the prime minister's post so that he could concentrate on the upcoming elections, while others concluded that Berezovsky himself might be losing influence). Potanin and Chubays may be looking for a Yeltsin heir of their own. Such is Russian reality.

That the Russian press is now openly writing about what everyone in Moscow already knew indicates the truth in the rumors: Yeltsin is senile; he is tired; he never really recovered from the exhausting 1996 presidential campaign and the open heart surgery that followed it. What's more, Yeltsin's health problems are aggravated by his decades of heavy drinking. Moscow elites are now beginning the hunt for his successor, or at least planning ahead for the swiftly approaching post-Yeltsin era, something they would not have dared to do—Kremlin contacts remain quite important in post-communist Russia—if the old man were still in charge. Moreover, Berezovsky's role, his special links with the "family" (which includes blood relations and a few apparatchiks close to the Yeltsins), is no longer off limits in the Russian media. And shades of Russia's past are haunting the collective mind of Russia. Has this all happened before? This fantastic little man with the rapid-fire speech, impressive intellect (a mathematician and "systems analyst," he is a member of the Russian Academy of Sciences), charismatic persona, and effortless energy—is he Yeltsin's Rasputin?

In *Nicholas and Alexandra*, a dissection of the family dynamics that lay at the heart of Kremlin politics under Nicholas II, Robert K. Massie recounts a bizarre meeting between reformist Prime Minister Pytor Stolypin and a certain wild-eyed Siberian faith healer: "He ran his eyes over me," remembered Stolypin, "mumbled mysterious and inarticulate words from the Scriptures [and] made strange movements with his hands. . . . I did realize that the man possessed great hypnotic power, which was beginning to produce a fairly strong moral impression on me. . . . I pulled myself together." What Stolypin did not know at the time was what would come of the strange encounter with Grigori Rasputin, debauched *starets*, or holy man, who had won the confidence of the Imperial family—or at least of the Empress Alexandra Fedorovna, who judged Rasputin capable of healing her hemophiliac son, Alexis, heir apparent to the Romanov throne. Rasputin informed the Empress that Stolypin had seemed inattentive—he had resisted Rasputin's hypnotic stare—and that the prime minister, a man whose reforms were just beginning to revitalize a moribund Russia in the fateful period before the Great War, did not appear to be chosen by God to lead the Russian government's ambitious reform program. Thus did Rasputin "take the empire," according to British physician J.B.S. Haldane, by "stopping the bleeding" of Alexis. Rasputin was deemed by some to be the author of the empire's decline. This certainly sealed the hairy, caftan-draped figure's fate: he was eventually murdered by a group of concerned Russian nobles. The damage, however, had been done.

Tales of Rasputin bringing about the dissolution of the empire are greatly exaggerated. Nevertheless, the malevolent influence of this hypnotic opportunist stifled Russian reforms and contributed to the debacle that would come. In fact, some courtiers considered him a German spy during the war years—Rasputin had taken to giving advice to the Imperial family on military as well as political matters—and the setbacks suffered by Russian arms only convinced those opposed to his influence that Rasputin was destroying Russia. His opponents (like Chubays and Potanin in their intrigues against Berezovsky) even won small, temporary victories against Rasputin: the holy man was twice ordered out of St. Petersburg, but he soon returned. Rasputin, it was plain, was giving something to the Romanovs that no one else could. In the true tradition of the Russian *starets*, all the Siberian fakir brought with him to the parlors of St. Petersburg was his commanding persona and the appearance of an ability to satisfy the desire of a loving and faithful wife and mother to secure the future of her long-suffering son and his simple-minded father. Rasputin, despite the intrigues of those who feared his influence, retained the family's confidence.

"History always repeats itself, the first time as tragedy, the second time as farce." This aphorism is much on Russian minds these days, as anyone who has seen the popular Russian TV program *Kukly* (*Puppets*) can certify. The puppets' dead-on impersonations of well-known public figures satirize Russian reality (within certain limits, since the program has attracted the unfavorable attention of the Kremlin on certain occasions), readily mocking the Kremlin's palace intrigues, as Byzantine as any under past rulers, imperial or communist. Yeltsin is increasingly portrayed as a doddering, indecisive figure, badgered by his wife and daughter to follow this or that policy and increasingly under the influence of Berezovsky, who uses his access to the faltering, easily manipulated president to move against his enemies. Judging from the ups and downs of Berezovsky and his enemies in recent months, as well as Yeltsin's erratic behavior and the sordid tales once leaking, now pouring, from the Kremlin, the picture *Kukly* presents is close to the true state of affairs atop what Russians call the "political Olympus" on the Moscow river.

The newspaper *Moskovsky Komsomolets* has been frank about the parallels between the Romanov's dependence on Rasputin and the Yeltsins' rumored dependence on Berezovsky. An article from February, written as a mock soap opera script, portrays Yeltsin as henpecked by his wife and his strong-willed daughter. Lurking in the shadows is the dark, weasel-like figure of Berezovsky, portrayed as a malevolent charlatan with a particularly strong hold on Naina and Tatyana. The paper is not shy about casting Berezovsky as the stereotypical conniving Jewish financier of legend and many a conspiracy theory: he is

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identified as the family's confidant and advisor (Berezovsky is widely believed to be building a nice nest egg for the Yeltsins, probably by investing recycled state funds in foreign banks and business enterprises via Yeltsin's son-in-law, who heads the airline *Aeroflot*), but also, tellingly, as an *inorodets*, an alien, a much stronger word than *inostranets*, foreigner. In the *Moskovsky Komsomolets* satire, the Russian reading public could not have missed the obvious parallels between the simple-minded Nicky and the senile Boris, the strong-willed Alexandra and the domineering pair, Tatyana and Naina, or between the hypnotic influence of Rasputin and the apparent power of Berezovsky. Even the crude "alien" charge invokes collective memories of Stalin unearthing plots by "rootless cosmopolitans" and of Czar Ivan III unmasking the court physician, Master Leon the Jew, who allegedly was planning the medical murder of Ivan's son and heir.

This mock soap opera was the most serious attack on Berezovsky in the Russian press up to that time, though the 52-year-old businessman and power broker seems, at this juncture, stronger than ever. Stronger, but not invulnerable, for the tale of Boris Berezovsky involves the whole of the transition of Russia from communism to what critics have dubbed "robber capitalism," which may be close to exhausting its potential for development by exhausting Russia.

The financial oligarchy that shares power in the Kremlin today is built around the "industrial financial" groups that have sprung up from what is left of the old Soviet financial and industrial ministries. Among the myriad strata of loosely connected "elites" are both new and old oligarchs who seized control of financial institutions and the Russian industrial base in the transition period from the late 1980's to the early 1990's. The old oligarchs are ex-Soviet ministers, plant directors, and industrial branch managers. During the initial phase of economic reforms in the late 1980's, they became "businessmen," managers and often stockholders (or at least trustees for managing state shares) in revamped industrial enterprises. The most important—and lucrative—of these are involved in extractive industries, particularly in oil and gas. The most prominent "old" oligarch is Chernomyrdin, whose base is the gas monopoly he built, Gazprom. The new oligarchs tend to have made their mark as bankers, either using state connections (Berezovsky's partner, Mikhail Khodorkovsky, worked in the Komsomol, the communist youth league) to gain a foothold in banking, or making their fortunes in shady business deals (the import-export business and financial pyramid operations proved lucrative for many aspiring oligarchs, including Berezovsky) and then quickly buying into banks.

The particular attraction of the banking industry is not difficult to ascertain. First, as state financial institutions were transformed into joint-stock companies, those who could secure a foothold in the fledgling banking industry gained access to the foreign currency reserves of the former system. With banking laws as yet uncodified, opportunities for plunder readily presented themselves. Second, by making sweetheart deals with Kremlin apparatchiks, the newly minted bankers were often granted "authorized" status, meaning that they were authorized to handle the accounts of certain still very productive state enterprises, such as Moscow's state-run arms sales agency. Third, when then privatization guru Anatoly Chubays began the process of privatizing huge state conglomerates, such as the telecommunications monopoly Svyazinvest, he made sure that "authorized" financial concerns won the auctions (it was the dispute between Berezovsky and Potanin over just who had been "authorized" to win the Svyazinvest auction that sparked the "bankers' war" in the first place), thus securing influential financial interests as his backers in Kremlin power games. Finally, by plundering state coffers and arranging insider deals with state officials, the new oligarchs became wealthy enough to branch out, buying up newspapers and television stations (for propaganda purposes) as well as oil companies and metallurgy concerns.

The new oligarchs were now strong enough to deal face-to-face with the "old," even to outstrip them in wealth and influence. By 1996, Russians spoke of a *semibankershina* ("rule of the seven [largest] banks") dominating Russia, an oligarchy headed by kingpins Berezovsky, Potanin, Khodorkovsky, Vladimir Gusinsky, Pyotr Aven, Mikhail Fridman, and Vladimir Smolensky. The "rule of the seven banks" ensured Yeltsin's re-election. Berezovsky, the unofficial first among equals of the banking oligarchy, engineered the campaign himself, with help from Tatyana, then publicly emerging as a power in her own right, and Chubays, then in tight with the seven strongmen. But the Svyazinvest row and the "bankers' war" spoiled the oligarchs' carefully laid plans and left the door open for some very unpleasant warfare in the oligarch-controlled media: six of the seven bankers are Jews. Potanin, all but cut out of Kremlin insider deals since the flare-up of the "bankers' war," is a Russian. But Berezovsky at one time held an Israeli passport (he claims he no longer does); Gusinsky, a leading figure in the World Jewish Congress, has bragged (on Israeli TV) of the power of the "Jewish lobby" in the Kremlin; and other leading Jewish bankers are rumored to hold foreign passports.

Their enemies have not let this opportunity slip past them. Potanin's newspaper, *Russky Telegraf*, occasionally drops not-so-subtle hints that Berezovsky's loyalty to Russia is, well, questionable. Berezovsky, for his part, has gone to great lengths to depict himself as devoted to Russia and defending Russia's national interests. He is even said to finance certain "patriotic" organizations as a sort of insurance policy for him and his allies, and he has clearly aligned himself with hard-liners like former Internal Affairs Minister Anatoly Kulikov, who commanded ground forces in the disastrous Chechen campaign, and the stodgy apparatchik, Chernomyrdin. Berezovsky's insurance policy may prove its worth in the near future.

The end game may have been foretold by the inclusion of Boris Nemtsov, formerly governor of the Nizhegorod region, a showcase of economic reform and relative stability in the Russian heartland, in the government in the spring of last year. First Deputy Premier Nemtsov, not yet 40 years old, is an outsider and Kremlin neophyte who espouses what he calls "people's capitalism," a program influenced by his political advisor, Viktor Aksyuchits, a Solzhenitsyn-inspired political philosopher and leader of the center-right Christian Democratic Movement. "People's capitalism" is a melding of Russian social traditionalism with "Westernizing" ideas of decentralization—including a distributist-oriented economic decentralization. Along with quintessential outsider Aleksandr Lebed, who espouses a remarkably similar political-economic line, and Duma faction leader and economist Grigory Yavlinsky, who designed Nemtsov's successful regional economic program, Nemtsov shares a reputation for honesty and integrity that is a rare commodity in Russian politics. Popularity polls consistently rate Nemtsov and Lebed at or near the top of the charts,

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and Yavlinsky, long hampered by a policy-wonk image, appears to be gaining some ground as well. Moscow is rife with rumors of a Lebed-Yavlinsky alliance, and Nemtsov's long association with Yavlinsky appears to make him a possible coalition partner, though the trio's personal ambitions make the formation of such an alliance problematic. A populist alliance, of course, would be the oligarchy's worst nightmare: Berezovsky's media outlets have attacked Nemtsov and Lebed with abandon in recent months, and efforts by the Kremlin Svengali to co-opt the oligarchy's most dangerous opponents have so far failed. Nemtsov advisor Aksyuchits has called Berezovsky "a source of evil in Russia," and Nemtsov, Lebed, and Yavlinsky continue to rail against "robber capitalism" and the "semi-criminal oligarchy," much to the delight of a jaded and long-suffering electorate.

But the possible rise of a populist coalition is only part of the rain that is already steadily falling on Berezovsky's parade. In January, signs that the Russian social-economic crisis might be approaching critical mass began to appear: miners in Vorkuta held enterprise managers hostage for a time, demanding payment of back wages (protests appear to be intensifying over unpaid state wages and pensions—about 40 percent of the country's industrial base is still state-owned); state foreign currency and gold reserves, used liberally in recent months to prop up the faltering ruble and finance government expenses, are rapidly dwindling, creating fear of a devaluation of the ruble and possible rampant inflation; foreign investors—a vital source of income for an all-but-bankrupt state treasury—appear to be pulling out of Russian securities markets, despite the temporary raising of interest rates on short-term government paper from 28 to 42 percent (the short-term nature of the securities is draining the Russian treasury almost as fast as investors can fill it); capital flight continues; oil prices on world markets have been on the decline recently, hurting one of the few profitable Russian industries (a devaluation of the ruble would do Russia little good because Russia depends on raw material exports, not finished goods, as a source of trade-generated income); the economy continues to stagnate; and the Kremlin appears headed for yet another round of intra-oligarchy infighting, further delaying critical economic reforms as the various interests maneuver to snatch up more property scheduled for privatization at fire-sale prices. Despite all of this, the clans still appear to be more concerned with seizing wealth than creating it.

Berezovsky has taken the recent spate of bold attacks on him in *Moskovsky Komsomolets* (controlled by Moscow Mayor Yuri Luzhkov, the Richard Daley of Russia) and in Potanin-controlled media quite seriously, seeing them as part and parcel of a Potanin-Chubays-Luzhkov plan to blame any financial collapse on a cabal of Jewish bankers headed by a latter-day Rasputin (in a March press interview, Chubays actually compared Berezovsky with the Siberian shaman). In fact, Berezovsky's media outlets appear to have taken a page from the Potanin-Chubays notebook: one Berezovsky-financed newspaper recently claimed that the financial crisis is being engineered by Chubays and George Soros as part of a plan to finish off Berezovsky and friends once and for all. Moreover, there are signs that law enforcement agencies—long influenced by Berezovsky—may be interested in finding out just who ordered the contract murder of Russian TV executive Vlad Listev in 1995 (most savvy Muscovites *know* that Berezovsky was behind this). Berezovsky and his cronies *do* appear quite vulnerable. In March, *Moskovskaya Pravda*, another paper tied to Luzhkov, upped the ante even further: a former KGB officer accused Berezovsky of being a Mossad agent. If a collapse does occur, then Berezovsky's head could very well wind up decorating the Kremlin wall—if his Israeli passport is not in order, that is, and if the West does not come through with more IMF and World Bank cash to keep the whole bloody mess running. (I am reminded of a Gorbachev-era political cartoon depicting the hapless Gorby at a bank teller's window marked "IMF," his gun pointed at his own temple. He warns, "Give me the money, or I'll shoot!")

Americans would do well to think of Russia not as some sort of political freak show but as a distant mirror. American workers whose jobs have been shipped to Mexico or Asia as a result of "free trade" deals made between monopolists and bureaucrats might believe that the Russian oligarchy is hardly in the same league with our own. Those of us who have followed the Clinton saga might think the Yeltsins to be less corrupt than the Clintons. How can a government in hock to China via the Lippo Group, or one that kowtows to the interests of Israel and Saudi Arabia, a government headed by a chief executive neck deep in vice and scandal, have the nerve to preach to the Russians about good government and reform? To paraphrase George McGovern, come home America. We may find that we have our own Rasputins to root out.

Long Branch Watchtower

by Emanuel di Pasquale

On Assumption Day
I swam in the high-tide waters
while my wife and daughter
sat on the lifeguard towers.
And my child made sand angels,
and my wife led us in a dance
of ring around the land
a pocketful of sand.
The waters were clear
as my child was fair.
The waters were blue
as my wife was true.
And the waves
wouldn't stand
still.

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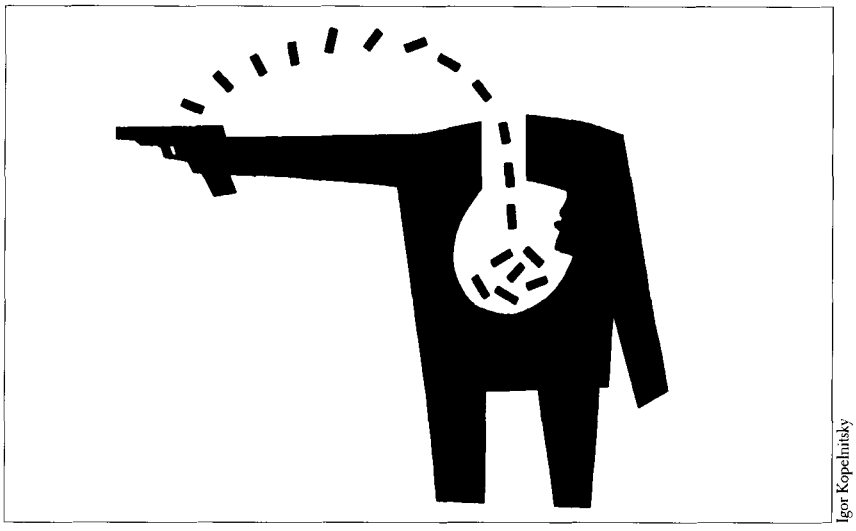
Foreign Policy and the Popular Will

by Erik von Kuehnelt-Leddihn



Igor Kopelnitsky

Is the foreign policy of the United States her Achilles' heel and the cause of endless dissatisfaction? Without doubt, if we remember the words of Clausewitz: wars are nothing but the continuation of diplomacy by other means. Yet wars are very costly because they involve not only money but, above all, human lives. Foreign relations are especially painful for Americans because America was born on the flight from the Old World, from which, to their discomfort and grief, Americans could never wholly dissociate themselves. This is evident not only from the Monroe Doctrine (designed to remove the Western Hemisphere from its global context), but also from the ambiguous title of "Secretary of State" given to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, whose role is so very different from those in the various states of the Union. Perhaps the elimination of geography from the American curriculum also has something to do with it. This educational lacuna had led all too many Americans to study the Old World merely by nibbling at its Atlantic seaboard. Yet the geographic heart of Europe is in Belarus.

The Founding Fathers wanted the United States to embody a *novus ordo seclorum* in the spirit of an unrealistic Edenism, and, not surprisingly, utopian dreamers have been attracted to the shores of this "Island of the Blessed." Even today there are Americans who speak of the "American Experiment," though the United States are by no means an "experiment" to be continued or called off but a solid piece of reality in this world, which according to Catholic tradition is a vale of tears, and in the words of Martin Luther, "the Devil's Inn." No wonder that the American heart is isolationist, but—to complicate matters—it is also inclined to refashion the rest of the world in its own image.

Still, owing to its origins, America has always been exposed to European influences. The word "democracy" appears neither in the Declaration of Independence nor in the Constitution, and the same can be said about the noun "republic." As Henry Adams argued, the year 1828 must be considered a watershed in American history. From then on, state and society have been increasingly democratized under the influence of a European ideology, the same process which took place in the Old World. We are all, to quote Melville, living in "the Dark Ages of Democracy," and this affects not only the inner life of the nations but also the relationships between them. Yet, contrary to some pious hopes, this will not lead us to the "end of history."

Devising a constructive, not merely political, but *historically* oriented foreign policy is therefore an acute problem for the United States, for what happens to it affects *all* "democracies." These are ruled mostly by parliaments composed of elected parties. Elections are held periodically, either according to the calendar or due to the termination of a parliamentary majority. Thus Italy has had, since the end of World War II, more than 50 different governments. Democracy in general and parliamentarianism in particular do not represent rule by "the people," but by the (temporary) majority over the (equally temporary) minority. In other words, instability is one of many characteristics of our "Western" political system.

Modern democracies are also ignorant, and they refuse to learn from experience. A person wanting to drive a car must prove his or her qualification, but neither the voter nor even those voted into power are subject to such scrutiny. Direct democracy (as practiced, for instance, in some cantons of the Swiss Federation) deals only with very simple local problems. But foreign policy, especially for world powers, requires enormous knowledge and experience. How can an average American citizen assess the necessity of the last two "foreign wars" fought by his country? And a simple French citizen the military intervention of his country in Bosnia? And what does Herr Müller understand about the necessity for the European Community to be properly armed at huge expense?

In a democracy, such "questions" are decided by popularly elected governments consisting of parties, and parties, as we all know, have the burning desire to be elected or reelected at all costs and to increase the number of their representatives. No majority, no power! In other words, voters blackmail their parties, and parties in turn bribe the voters with the promise to ful-

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Erik von Kuehnelt-Leddihn is the author of a dozen books, among them Leftism Revisited: From de Sade and Marx to Hitler and Pol Pot *(Regnery).*

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fill their desires. This might be primarily the case for domestic affairs, but it also concerns foreign policy. Here we have to bear in mind that by 1910 practically all of Europe had constitutional monarchies and only a few republics, but in any case, the parliaments held the purse strings. History might have followed a totally different course if the Austrian parliament had voted the money for the introduction of the breach loader, which the Prussians had already introduced in their army. Thus Prussia won the war of 1866 against the German League headed by Austria. And in 1936, Stanley Baldwin admitted in the House of Commons that the Conservatives would have lost the last elections even more dramatically if in their program they had featured rearmament. "Our specific democracy," he said, "would have reacted against such a proposition." Popularity, not the good of the country, is the prime motive of parties. Lloyd George, too, was riding the wave of popularity when, in his election speeches after the armistice in 1918, he promised to "Hang the Kaiser" and make the Germans pay "that the pips squeak," which led to the reparations, the ruin of the German middle class, and the rise of Hitler. Peace treaties in the democratic age do not have to satisfy monarchs, merely the voters "back home" who are moved by sympathies and antipathies and who judge other nations not impartially but according to their racial, ethnic, religious, or political-constitutional affinity.

George F. Kennan saw the different treatment of Finland and Poland in the light of these "popular" sympathies. (Lloyd George, needless to say, admired Hitler and despised the Poles.) Indeed, democracies are gravely handicapped in preparing for (unavoidable) wars and in making peace because the conditions laid down by the victors must please the voters. Thus Hitler was not truly born in Braunau, but in Versailles. The treaty dictated there under duress (continuation of the hunger blockade) was immediately denounced by John Maynard Keynes, a better prophet than economist, as a possible catalyst of future catastrophes.

In a democracy, then, "politics" is conducted between unavoidably ignorant multitudes facing gigantic problems and amateurish "professional" politicians. The larger and the more "progressive" a nation, the more involved its problems—very unlike the problems facing the cantons of Switzerland. A sound foreign policy demands infinitely greater knowledge and practice than the handling of mere local issues. Yet the backgrounds, upbringing, and education of our temporary rulers, and above all of our foreign ministers, are now the despair of impartial observers. The outstanding statesmen in American and European history used to be monarchs, and their aides and representatives were aristocrats with an international outlook, not darlings of the masses such as Ledru-Rollin, who exclaimed, "I am the leader of the people, I have to follow it!" In non-democracies, responsible administrators have more time to collect information and to learn the ropes. For example, Andrei Gromyko, Soviet foreign minister and perhaps a mediocre mind, knew after 34 years who was who and what was what. Democratized Americans view the expert with great suspicion, but they would not like to see amateurism prevail in the clinics of Rochester, Minnesota. Government, however, is not concerned with the survival of a few patients but with the protection of millions of people. One would think this would push our leaders to formulate long-term strategies, but this is not the case. Our democratic age does not think or act with future generations in mind, but only from one legislative period to another. How then can one expect a reasonable foreign policy?

I was born in 1909, and so I have witnessed much of the sickness plaguing the world today. The world's democracies now resemble a huge Punch and Judy show, with presidents, prime ministers, chancellors, foreign ministers, state secretaries jumping up and down, making decisions and calculations based not on reasoned concern but on the politics of the moment. After World War II, the democracies produced only two leaders who could qualify as statesmen—Charles de Gaulle, who took over the bankrupt Fourth French Republic, and Konrad Adenauer, whom the Germans dubbed the *Demokrator*. These two men were personal friends. They were born not more than 300 miles apart, were both devout Catholics, and could talk to each other without interpreters. Yet each time they met and made plans for the future they had to add the momentous words, "We'll do this or that *provided we are re-elected*."

Prior to the French Revolution, alliances and enmities had a certain continuity. The *renversement des alliances* in 1756, which broke the age-old French-Prussian friendship and started the Seven Years War, was regarded as revolutionary. (In his first Political Testament, Frederick II of Prussia had called France the classic ally of his country.) Yet the great uncertainties of a foreign policy in a world of parliamentary elections were heralded by the break of the Anglo-Austrian Alliance in the War of Spanish Succession, when Britain arranged for a separate peace with France and left the Austro-Germans holding the bag . . . and this in the midst of a major war. Elections had replaced the Whigs and the Tories, and the Duke of Marlborough was recalled from the battlefields. This earned England the title of "Perfidious Albion."

Trusts and true friendship between countries are rare today, and they can hardly exist between democratically ruled countries. The European countries can confide in the United States as little as the United States can confide in European countries. Can Taiwan really count on the United States? Could South Vietnam? Read the letter President Nixon wrote to Nguyen Van Thieu promising full American intervention should North Vietnam break the armistice, and then decide. (Of course, the question arises whether the American President could give such an assurance without congressional backing.) New elections in the Near East have nearly destroyed the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. How can "anonymously voting" nations trust each other? Theodor Herzl, Israel's founding father, knew this only too well and warned the Zionists in this programmatic *Der Judenstaat* never to adopt democracy, but since there existed no known descendant of King David, he encouraged them to study the constitution of the elitist Republic of Venice.

With constitutionally organized instability and change, hopping from one election to another, with populations in immensely complex civilizations exposed to mass media in which the half-educated lord it over the quarter-educated, the formation of an historically oriented foreign policy cannot be expected. How can this be remedied in an age when, on top of it all, the French revival of democracy has brought us conscription and total war involving *all* civilians?

Tyranny is by no means the only alternative to democracy. Still, the countless military cemeteries the world over should give us pause. As to the problem of foreign policy, one thing is certain: one cannot shoot at moving objects with a shaky arm and swimming eyes. <c>

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The Pleasurable Science

by Justin Raimondo

"No nation ever made its bread either by its great arts, or its great wisdoms. By its minor arts or manufactures, by its practical knowledges, yes; but its noble scholarship, its noble philosophy, and its noble art are always to be bought as a treasure, not sold for a livelihood."

—John Ruskin

Economic Thought Before Adam Smith: An Austrian Perspective on the History of Economic Thought, Volume I

Classical Economics: An Austrian Perspective on the History of Economic Thought, Volume II
by Murray N. Rothbard
Aldershot, Hants, England: Edward Elgar;
556 pp. and 526 pp., respectively;
$110 each

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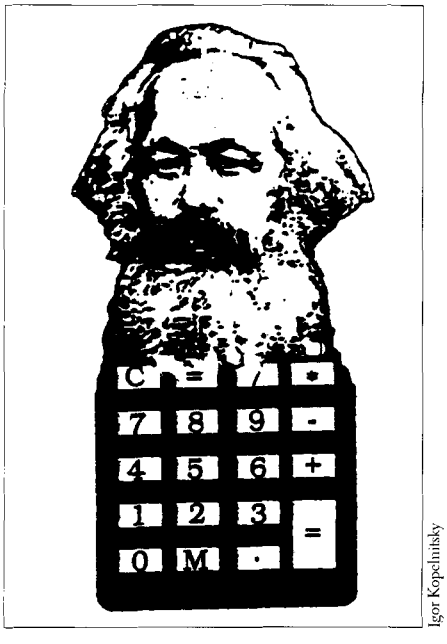

Igor Kopelnitsky

Is it a law of physics, or of human nature, that frequently dooms genius to obscurity during its lifetime? While every nonentity has his 15 minutes of fame, anything more enduring seems governed by a simple principle: death precedes recognition. In the case of Murray Rothbard, the axiom applies in spades. The dean of the Austrian or pure free market school of economics, Rothbard was the author of 28 books, wrote thousands of articles and reviews, and founded the libertarian movement literally in his living room. Not until the last years of his life did this productive and innovative scholar receive at least some measure of the honor that was his due: in 1994, The Rockford Institute awarded him The Ingersoll Foundation's Richard M. Weaver Award for Scholarly Letters. Wider acclaim, however, eluded him. This was due, first of all, to the undying enmity of precisely those people whose business it is to hand out awards, fellowships, academic appointments, and other emoluments. The Establishment which Rothbard lambasted was hardly likely to honor him—living or dead.

Even his libertarian adherents, outside the immediate circle of his friends and colleagues, failed to see what they had in Rothbard. This under-appreciation may be attributed, in part, to Rothbard's own struggle to find a literary form equal to the scope of his erudition. While a quick glance at the footnotes of the 26 books he published before his death would indicate the breadth and depth of his knowledge, no single work gave him the scope to bring it all into play. It was, instead, the accumulated weight of his achievements in various fields—economics, philosophy, history, political theory—that won him what acclaim he garnered during his lifetime. With the publication of the *History of Economic Thought*, however, Rothbard's stature cannot be denied. The richness of anecdote and analysis, the scope of the research, the transparency of the language, and the lightning flashes of wit that illuminate these two volumes are impossible to summarize, except in a single word: masterpiece.

In the course of researching a biography of Rothbard, I came across a 1983 letter in which he complains of "a crisis in my *History of Economic Thought* book." The original publisher wanted the manuscript in short order, and his editor insisted that Rothbard "stress the post-[Adam] Smith era." The only way to do that, and also bow to the publisher's edict to keep it short, was to scrap everything he had written to that point "and to write what *he* wants—what Joey [JoAnn Rothbard, his wife] calls for short the *Ten Great Modern Economists*, and then hope that there will be enough time to link the two books up into one. If not, I may wind up with [one short book] and a larger, much broader book on the whole shebang." Luckily for future generations, he did not scrap the first volume; instead, as he writes in his acknowledgments, "after pondering the problem . . . I told [the editor] that I would have to begin with Aristotle, since Smith was a sharp decline from many of his predecessors."

"The whole shebang" is the only phrase that does justice to Rothbard's theme. Rejecting the narrowly "economic" in favor of presenting the philosophical, religious, and political context in which economic theories are formulated, Rothbard created a vivid panorama of the history of thought: not just economic thought, but *all* thought. The method follows the injunction of his

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great mentor, Ludwig von Mises, that economics is but a branch of praxeology (the study of human action), which also includes psychology, history, ethics, political economy, and all the social (or "soft") sciences. Whatever editor thought such a project could be shoehorned into a few hundred pages had no understanding of Austrian economics—or of Rothbard. However frustrating it might have been for Rothbard, this woeful ignorance, far from deterring or discouraging him, merely made him all the more determined to educate such people, raising them up, as it were, to his level of understanding. The impulse to correct error—and not only to correct it but to offer a complex and closely reasoned alternate paradigm—is what made him a great educator, as well as a world-class polemicist.

Against the Great Man theory of economic history, in which "Adam Smith created economics, much as Athena sprang full-grown and fully armed from the brow of Zeus," Rothbard counterposes a new and very different paradigm. The conventional wisdom is that, since Smith, the progress of "economic science" has been ever in the ascendant. This complements the contemporary view of economics as a "science," which, like physics, steadily increases its knowledge and accuracy and perfects its analysis toward complete understanding. This ever-onward-and-upward view of economic history, says Rothbard, is demonstrably false. There is such a thing as "lost knowledge"; history can (and all too often does) take a wrong turn. Citing Thomas Kuhn's *Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, Rothbard points out that not even the "hard" physical sciences follow this "romantic, Panglossian" course. Debunking what Rothbard calls "the Whig theory of history" in the sciences, Kuhn showed that science did not develop in this way. A paradigm, once selected, is rarely either tested or challenged: only when the number of anomalies and contradictions proliferate to the point of "crisis" is the paradigm successfully challenged and replaced. Kuhn's insight "rings true," as Rothbard puts it, "both as history and as sociology."

If the modernist prejudice that "later is better" is inapplicable to the "hard" sciences, it is even less relevant to the study of the "soft" sciences, including economics. Looking past the dominant paradigm, Rothbard saw that "economics can and has proceeded in contentious, even zig-zag fashion, with later systemic fallacy sometimes elbowing aside earlier but sounder paradigms, thereby redirecting economic thought down a totally erroneous or even tragic path."

The "Few Great Men theory of economic history" starts with Adam Smith, Founder—not only of free-market theory, but of economics *per se*. Yet Rothbard reveals a rich and extensive pre-Smithian tradition running from the ancients (Greece, Rome, China) to the medieval scholastics. In his first volume, Rothbard shows that economic thought did not begin—or even reach its apogee—with the career of an 18th-century Scottish Calvinist. "It all began, as usual, with the Greeks," he writes, the first discoverers of the concept and principles of natural law.

Rothbard's view of economic thought among the ancients begins with Plato as the archetypal totalitarian-mystic, the original oligarch and precursor of all the vanguard parties to come. To the Platonists, the "limitations" imposed by natural law are intolerable, therefore the goal is to "transcend" them. Alienated from his true self—which is eternal, transcending time and space—man tries to regain his godlike state. Overcoming "alienation," as Rothbard vividly demonstrates in the next thousand or so pages, has been the motive and overriding purpose of scores of religious and ideological movements, from the Protestant Reformation to the secularized millennialism of Marx and communism to the post-millennial pietist prophets of "progressive" economic and social reform in America.

This history of economic thought, then, is simultaneously a history not only of philosophy and politics but of religion. Here we encounter the controversial thesis of Emil Kauder, the German-born Austrian historian, so central to this work. Kauder maintained that Adam Smith, far from being the founder of economics, was the author of a major error that diverted the field away from a proto-Austrian subjective utility theory of value, with its emphasis on relative scarcity, and substituted for it the labor theory of value. The Spanish and Italian scholastics of the Middle Ages and the early Renaissance, as well as the French economists of the 18th century, had a far more sophisticated conception of the market than did Smith: their emphasis had been on subjective valuation, entrepreneurship, and prices fluctuating with demand. Smith changed all that. By shifting the focus of economics from subjective valuation to labor, Kauder contended that Smith ought to be granted "the dubious honor of being 'a necessary precursor of Karl Marx.'"

Kauder's thesis, however, goes far beyond debunking Adam Smith. As Rothbard relates in his introduction, Kauder's theory answers the question: "Why is it, for example, that the subjective utility tradition flourished on the Continent, especially in France and Italy, and then revived particularly in Austria, whereas the labor and cost of production theories developed especially in Great Britain?" In Kauder's view, the difference was due to the decisive role of religion in the life of a people. The culture of Southern Europe, of the scholastics and the French and Italian *laissez faire* theorists, was permeated with a Catholic sensibility. Catholicism, with its Thomistic-Aristotelian tradition, translated into the idea that the goal of production is consumption, that moderate consumption is not sinful, and that life is to be enjoyed. This view implies that economic values are subjective since different things are enjoyed by different people.

In the case of the Protestant ethos, however, doctrinal and emotional assumptions are very different, as is the resulting economic theory. In rebellion against the supposed slackening of original Christian doctrine, the Protestants harkened back to what they imagined was the original asceticism of Christianity. Particularly galling to the rebels was the sophisticated economic analysis of the Spanish scholastics, who by the mid-to-late Middle Ages had swept away the medieval ban on charging interest for a loan ("usury") in everything but the most formal sense. The Calvinist emphasis on labor ("toil to the glory of God") as a good in and of itself was conducive to the labor theory of value, which imputed some inherent measure of worth to the products of man's labor. And if man, as the original Calvinists asserted, is predestined to walk a certain path, if the elect are chosen not by their acts but by the unknowable will of God, then surely the economic choices of such creatures are similarly predestined. Unlike the Catholic theorists of the natural law tradition, the Calvinist and Lutheran ideologues rejected reason as the framework

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of ethics, insisting instead on divine revelation as the only path to truth. "If reason cannot be used to frame an ethic," writes Rothbard, "this means that Luther and Calvin had to, in essence, throw out natural law, and in doing so, they jettisoned the basic criteria developed over the centuries by which to criticize the despotic actions of the state." Anyone else would have left it at that: a simple statement of his argument, with no further evidence offered. But in a typical flourish, Rothbard illuminates his subject with a lightning flash of insight: "One of the expressions of this conflict came over religious holidays, which Catholic countries enjoyed in abundance. To the Puritans, this was idolatry; even Christmas was not supposed to be an occasion for sensate enjoyment."

Here is the clincher that makes the case, a vivid example that brings home the centrality of culture and religion to the evolution of economic thought. Under the accumulated weight of considerable evidence, Rothbard shows that militant asceticism—from Plato's dictatorship of the philosopher-kings to the postmillennial pietism that energized the Progressive era—is inevitably a rationale for tyranny and invariably an occasion for blood-letting on a massive scale. This is a major theme of these volumes, one which runs through all of Rothbard's writings: the importance of human enjoyment, of *pleasure* in life, and, therefore, in economics.

A complete and thorough survey of the material covered in these thousand pages would take up an entire issue of *Chronicles*. Reviewers of Rothbard's magnum opus are therefore forced to focus on a few specifics. A high point is Rothbard's definitive treatment of Marxism as "an atheized variant of a venerable Christian heresy," which weaves together the various thematic strands that run through both volumes. The Kuhnian theory of the paradigm shift, in Rothbard's creative hands, maps the regression from Smith to Marx through Ricardo. The Kauder thesis is expanded to explain the rise of communism as a consequence of the Reformation, a *theological* phenomenon secularized by German Romantics and their British imitators.

Central to the Rothbardian view of Marxism is his incisive analysis of Marx the man. According to the "scientific" view of "objectivity," only Marx's ideas are grist for the historical mill, any prying into the individual psychology of the economist himself being somehow unfair and "ad hominem." But as Rothbard pointed out many times, and not only in this context, social "forces" and other aggregates are nonexistent entities; only individuals act, in the market and in life. Therefore, the vagaries and personal idiosyncrasies of individuals are a factor in the development of religious, political, and economic ideas, and a valid field of investigation for those who seek to understand the real sources of Marxism—indeed, of any "ism."

As Rothbard points out, there has been an attempt in recent years to distinguish a benign "young Marx" from the elder Stalinist Marx. In a startling and unusual manner, Rothbard shows that "there is only one Marx, whether early or late." In a perceptive and original analysis of Marx's early poetry, often dismissed as adolescent musings of no consequence, Rothbard pinpoints the pure hatred of life, of humanity, and of the natural law that produced, in the man of mature years, a monstrous system of almost satanic evil. ("See this sword? / The prince of darkness / Sold it to me." And what could be more explicit than: "With Satan I have struck my deal / He chalks the signs, beats time for me./ I play the death march fast and free"?)

This death march has been the *Leitmotif* of the 20th century, an era which Rothbard denounced in his famous inaugural speech as president of the John Randolph Club as the century of mass murder, totalitarianism, socialism, and devastation on a scale unmatched in all of human history. "Repeal the 20th century!" was the slogan he offered to his fellow Randolphians: Roll back not only the Great Society, but the Fair Deal, the New Deal, the statist "reforms" of the Progressive Era—go back, he urged us, retrace your steps to that fateful crossroads where a wrong turn was taken, and, as he puts it in these volumes, regain "paradigms lost."

Rothbard's enemies on the right, notably William F. Buckley, Jr., tried to smear him as a leftist for opposing the Cold War, but this profoundly conservative theme should put that old canard to rest. Against the idea of progress as an automatic series of ascending steps toward the truth and the light, Rothbard held up the vision of knowledge lost and then rediscovered, and of history as an uncertain and heroic struggle to maintain and improve the human condition. He was a man of the right, not only ideologically but temperamentally as well. Upholding the natural law tradition of Aristotle, Aquinas, the scholastics, and Catholicism as the fountainhead of human freedom ought to score him some points with *National Review*. But Rothbard was a man of the *Old* Right, one of the hated "isolationists," permanently ostracized therefore by the right-wing social democrats who have commandeered the conservative movement.

At the conclusion of these volumes, Rothbard breaks off a discussion of Carl Menger and the rise of marginalism, explaining, "But that is the stuff of another volume." Tragically, there was to be no third volume. Rothbard died on January 7, 1995, before he could put to paper a book that was already written "in my head," as he explained to a colleague shortly before that tragic day. The story of the history of economic thought in the 20th century, the rise of the Austrians, the triumph of Keynes, the crisis of the Keynesian paradigm, and the summation of what was to be, in an important sense, the capstone of the Rothbardian system—all this was lost when a great mind flickered out.

Yet the magnitude of Rothbard's achievement was such that his legacy is assured; his contribution to the cause of liberty in America will not only endure but continue to grow in stature. As an economist, he succeeded in firmly establishing the Austrian school of economics in America, expanding and refining the legacy of his own mentor, the great Ludwig von Mises. As a system-builder, he completed the intellectual edifice that was the work of a lifetime in its general outlines and established it upon a solid base. Keeping in mind the limited value of scientific analogies in this context, we may conclude that the totality of his writings—culminating in these volumes—presents the equivalent of a unified field theory for the social sciences.

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Paleo Prophets

by J.O. Tate

The Unregenerate South: The Agrarian Thought of John Crowe Ransom, Allen Tate, and Donald Davidson
by Mark G. Malvasi
Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press; 261 pp., $35.00

Barbarians in the Saddle: An Intellectual Biography of Richard M. Weaver
by Joseph Scotchie
New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers; 161 pp., $29.95

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The 12 Southerners who contributed to *I'll Take My Stand* (1930) must have been a terrible failure, for the South as well as the rest of the nation ignored their warnings and injunctions. Yet, in their failure—caused in part by the frustration of the Depression and sealed by the global engagement of World War II—they were also a tremendous success. We live in the bloated and noisy wreck they foresaw, and we know it.

The cultural inversion that is promoted by big business, big government, and education has made a hash of the life of the mind, and produced, as Waco dramatized, a war on the people. The newspapers, as of this writing, are filled with dire warnings about a possible foreign war with an obscure country some thousands of miles away that might possibly possess "instruments of mass destruction," which might be identified if they could be found. But of course our own economy has been distorted to produce incalculable weapons of mass destruction with which the government routinely threatens others. Meanwhile, the rest of the front page concerns the schedule and whereabouts not of Saddam Hussein but of the President of the United States, whose devotion to duty has kept him from replying to salacious allegations which are supposed to preoccupy us for the foreseeable future.

The Southerners knew that ideas have consequences. They warned that unchecked capitalism would assume Soviet-style power. They cautioned that radical changes must produce radical results. They forewarned an environmental crisis, a loss of liberty, a swollen bureaucracy, and conditions which would destroy culture, virtue, and the private household. So they urged their fellow Southerners to remain "backwards," to revere their heritage, and to maintain their culture.

The South today, of course, has largely embraced the rat-race as a way of life, but not all of it has—nor has all of America. Interestingly enough, the Vanderbilt Agrarians were taken to task in their time for being reactionaries, which of course they were. The myth of progress, a mask for power, does not permit any challenges. The Agrarians were also tarred as "racists," since the Old South was in large part a slave society, and the South of 1930 was segregated. But the race card is only another mask for power. Scottish philosopher Adam Ferguson anticipated their case 160 years earlier in describing the differences between the clan community of the Highlands and the commercial society of the lowlands in his remarkable *Essay on the History of Civil Society* (1767). We may note that discussions of race were not an issue at that time and place; that capitalist development continued; and that the issue of power has not died in Scotland to this day. Should the South, because of race, be exempted from any such inquiry regarding cultural values and self-government? That has been the liberal consensus about the South in 1930, in 1965, and now in 1998, with an Arkansan in the White House who has declared that Chechen separatism is as dangerous as secession was in 1861. There's no business like show business, and no empire like "democracy."

The most notable contributors to *I'll Take My Stand* made their mark as writers and academics, not as political leaders. John Crowe Ransom, Allen Tate, and Donald Davidson were first and foremost poets, critics, and professors. Yet their dissension from the national complacency is remembered as an injunction by some, and as a horror by others. They have been called sexists, racists, and fascists, among other terms that say more about those who sling unlettered epithets than about those who suffer them. They remain distinguished in claiming that neither communism nor gilded excess was necessary or desirable. And they remain a challenge for their sense that the South, far from being the whipping boy of national mythology, was actually a model for living. Theirs was the most notable demurral from the national consensus in the 20th century.

The Old South was long gone in 1930, and the "New South" of 1930 is now also gone. The Southerners had the temerity to suggest that the South, as an example of a traditional society, provided a positive image of a way to live. Mark Malvasi's study of the Agrarian thought of three well-known Southerners is a valuable new statement of their engagement with their past and their future, which then became our present.

Balanced and critical, Malvasi's exposition has numerous merits. The first is to draw to our attention the value—the enduring value—of Agrarian insights. The second is to show the diverging evolution of their thinking. Ransom abandoned Agrarianism for philosophical and aesthetic pursuits, repeating a progression that was established by the Romantics. Tate converted to Roman Catholicism and softened his politics, though he did not repudiate the Agrarian enterprise. Donald Davidson wound up as an active reactionary, and a principled one. In remembering him, we have to remember (as Malvasi does) not only his poems and other works, but the ultimate effects that government-enforced racial integration has had upon education and culture in our country.

Some may think, as I do, that Malvasi's insistence upon a flaw in the Agrarian vision—namely, a failure to apprehend the nature of slavery in the Old South—is too pronounced and schematic. Even so, his survey is valuable for reminding us of the accessible virtues of the rare and imposing criticism that these three Agrarians gave to modern America. Malvasi's book is not at all a rehash of old arguments but is precisely attuned to contemporary concerns and

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issues.

Malvasi goes on from the Agrarians to link their thought with that of their best successors—Richard Weaver and M.E. Bradford. And he connects this story with the failure of "conservative" politics in recent years. Though the Agrarians had pointedly refused to worship the god of Progress, that is precisely the rhetoric of the conservative coalition today, as well as the ostensible rhetoric of the organized left. The Old Right has been put out to pasture, having served the purposes of others. Nevertheless, in the long run, the truth will out; when it does, Malvasi's analysis of the ultimate concerns of Ransom, Tate, and Davidson will prove most useful in assembling an agendum for the future.

Richard M. Weaver, the subject of Joseph Scotchie's related study, is remembered as an author and as an editor of *National Review* who wrote for that periodical from the time of its founding in 1955 until his death in 1963. Readers of this journal are aware that The Rockford Institute has bestowed The Ingersoll Foundation's Richard M. Weaver Award for Scholarly Letters on such luminaries as Russell Kirk, Andrew Lytle, Robert Nisbet, John Lukacs, Edward Shils, Forrest McDonald, and Eugene Genovese. And some may remember that Weaver himself received the Young Americans for Freedom Award at a rally at Madison Square Garden in 1962, for "service to education and the philosophy of a free society." He would not receive any such award today, any more than M.E. Bradford could become the head of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Weaver's *Ideas Have Consequences* (1948) is one of the strongest reactionary statements rendered in modern times. Possibly more than any other book, it stimulated the formulation of a philosophical conservatism in this country, as Robert Nisbet claimed. In those years, Russell Kirk and William F. Buckley, Jr., joined with Weaver in trying to prevent the self-destruction of civilization. *Ideas Have Consequences* is very much a useful book today, though I must say that Weaver's attack on jazz seems more than quaint. Jazz today is museum music, sad to say, in need of nothing so much as a government grant. What has replaced it makes Louis Armstrong seem like Beethoven. In his other writings, such as *The Ethics of Rhetoric* and *Visions of Order*, Weaver showed his connection with the Agrarians. He had studied with Cleanth Brooks and Robert Penn Warren at Louisiana State University in the early 40's, and went on to affirm a traditionalist view even though he himself was an apartment-dwelling urbanite who died alone in Chicago.

Joseph Scotchie's book is bracing and provocative. He sees Weaver clearly, and sees clearly too the repudiation of his values by the political forces with which Weaver allied himself. In that sense, though he is less critical, Scotchie's view of the political prophet is much like that of Malvasi. As Scotchie concludes, "Weaver, Davidson, Lytle, Bradford. Some days you get the feeling that the South's greatest export isn't cotton, tobacco, peaches, or sugar, but producing prophets without honor in their own country."

Indeed. But these books are nevertheless honors to those prophets. And their country has never needed them (the prophets as well as their visions) more than it does right now.

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Hijacking History

by Gerald Thompson

History on Trial: Culture Wars and the Teaching of the Past
by Gary B. Nash, Charlotte Crabtree, and Ross E. Dunn
New York: Alfred A. Knopf; 318 pp., $26.00

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The most important thing to know about this volume is that its authors were the principal formulators of the infamous National History Standards of 1995. The United States Senate was so dismayed by the History Standards that it voted 99 to 1 to reject the efforts of this trio of historians from UCLA. *History on Trial* is an attempt to re-visit the History Standards debate and show how "ultra-right wingers" managed to dupe the public and sabotage the authors' "moderate" standards.

A little background may be a useful antidote to *History on Trial*. By the late 1980's, many Americans were calling for reform of the history curriculum. A critical event in the movement toward curriculum reform occurred when education professors Chester Finn, Jr., and Diane Ravitch published *What Do Our 17-Year-Olds Know?: A Report on the First National Assessment of History and Literature* (1987). Drawing upon a standardized history test administered to over 8,000 students, the report showed in alarming detail just how poorly many K-12 teachers were doing when it came to teaching historical studies. The one "positive" showing was that this historical ignorance cut broadly across boundaries of race and sex.

A few examples from their study will demonstrate the depth of the problem: only one-third of high school seniors could date the founding of Jamestown as occurring before 1750; less than a third could place the Civil War within the era of 1850 to 1900 or connect the Reformation with the formation of Protestant sects; four-fifths failed to associate "Reconstruction" with the post-Civil War South or the "Progressive Era" with pre-World War I reform. Even long-standing clichés went unidentified. Only 50 percent of surveyed students could name the person who said, "Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country." Finally, only a third managed to link the phrase "we hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men are created equal" with the Declaration of Independence.

The general public, recognizing that something awful had transpired in education in the years since most of them had attended high school, was appalled. Those of us teaching college survey classes in American history, however, were hardly surprised. Almost any semester would confirm the results of the Finn and Ravitch experiment. But with the publication of *What Do Our 17-Year-Olds Know?*, history teachers at all levels finally possessed the hard evidence needed to declare that the "feel good" methodologies developed in recent decades by professional educationists had not only failed to improve students' grasp on historical learning but had created an intellectual wasteland in the attempt. The observation in the halls of higher education that college professors were often expected to teach courses dumbed-down to the level of a good high school history class from the 1950's, or earlier, became commonplace.

Many historians, including a substan-

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tial number of conservatives, concluded that standards should be developed to set historical education on track again. Surely, there existed a core of objective facts related to history (or any other subject for that matter) that an educated American could be expected to know. This was admittedly an old-fashioned approach to education, pushing most complex arguments of interpretation back to advanced undergraduate or graduate-level courses and testing first-year students primarily on verifiable facts. Thus, the opening years of the history standards movement seemed to offer hope: educational leaders, as well as the public, finally had decided to confront the reality of widespread historical ignorance.

What was surprising in the early years of the history standards debate was the naivete of conservatives, many of whom supposed that the historical and educational professions, long dominated by extreme leftists, would abandon their professed intent to employ history as a means in the creation of a brave new world. Practicing historians on the left saw history standards as a powerful weapon with which to force a leftist version of history upon an unsuspecting audience. Factual content under the UCLA History Standards was far less important to them than politically correct interpretations were. Those of us who belong to the Joe Friday school of historiography ("Just the facts, ma'am") are frequently ridiculed in *History on Trial* and compared with Mr. Gradgrind at the opening of his school in Dickens' *Hard Times*: "Now what I want is the facts. Teach these boys and girls nothing but the facts. Facts alone are wanted in life. Plant nothing else and root out everything else. . . . This is the principle upon which I bring up my own children. Stick to the facts, sir." For the academic left, of course, it is interpretation, not factual content, which reigns supreme. And *History on Trial* never lets slip just how deep is the lack of factual understanding on the part of American students. One would think that Nash, Crabtree, and Dunn were addressing medieval peasants in their condescending assertion that facts and interpretations are two separate and distinct ways of teaching. In reality, a knowledge of events precedes interpretation of those same events; indeed, the greater the factual understanding of an incident, the less likely that an historian will be able to distort the event's history, since facts have a way—often disconcerting—of grounding readers in reality.

By the early 1990's, the great history standards hijack was well under way. When grant money was awarded and the project fell into the hands of the three from UCLA, the leftist bias of the final document became a foregone conclusion. Indeed, the first version of their standards proved so extreme that the Gang of Three was compelled to revise this document, the most important change being to uncouple the classroom examples from the standards themselves. In most cases the actual standards or goals, delineated by historical eras and student grade levels, are sufficiently vague that both liberals or conservatives will find little to dispute in them. However, it is in the examples section of the standards that a leftist bias remains evident—and without the examples, the History Standards are of little use to teachers.

Thus the major criticisms of the standards as a whole were directed against the examples section, from which the names of numerous prominent Americans were omitted and where an ultra-left-wing tilt was perceptible overall. (Richard Nixon, for example, is presented as an omnipresent, satanic being in the part dealing with the post-World War II era.) At the time, though, I was more concerned with factual errors than with simple bias. Writing in 1995, Forrest McDonald, one the leading historians of the constitutional era of American history, claimed to have found "nine major errors, not to mention a total lack of understanding or familiarity with modern scholarship," on one page alone of the History Standards proposal.

For an idea of how the revised standards are supposed to work, let us look at Standard 2A, which asks students in grades seven and eight to evaluate the significance of Columbus's voyage and assess his relations with indigenous peoples. The example asks students to respond to the question: "How, for example, did Columbus's description of the playful and pleasant nature of the Carib Indians contrast with his treatment of them?" This is either another error on the part of the authors or a fairly clever trick question. On his voyages, Columbus encountered two distinct indigenous peoples—the Arawaks and the Caribs. He described the former as peaceful, gentle folk who would make ideal slaves or servants. In contrast, the Caribs were hostile from the moment of first contact, and Columbus argued that they might have to be exterminated. In my classes at the University of Toledo, I often use Columbus's view of the Arawaks and Caribs to make a general statement about history. Today, the peaceful, gentle Arawaks no longer exist, but the difficult Caribs continue to plague potential masters in the region—most recently the Sandinistas of Nicaragua. Errors such as confusing the Caribs and Arawaks are inexcusable—they are not matters of opinion, but constitute the historical record.

Having provoked so much attention in the popular press, the issue of National History Standards then faded away, possibly leading readers of *History On Trial* to believe that it had all been right-wing hoopla about minor differences. And though the federal government rejected the standards, many local school districts went ahead and adopted them anyway. The standards and the accompanying text have sold well. Those who continue to battle the national standards are still dismissed as "ultra-rightists"—the term used throughout *History on Trial* to describe the project's critics. All moderates, one is led to believe, will agree that the standards are balanced, multicultural, and forward-looking.

Parents whose children are having the history standards foisted upon them need to read the detailed criticisms that are available, such as the Spring 1995 number of *Continuity*, which the editors devoted entirely to "A Critique of the National History Standards." In that symposium Forrest McDonald writes, "If the historical revisionists have their way, the entire heritage of Western Civilization will be swept away, and traditional American values will be consigned to the scrap heap." Like McDonald I believe that while such a catastrophe is unlikely to occur, in the short run we may expect continued academic unpleasantness and—what is worse—continued historical illiteracy. Big Brother is out there, waiting in the wings to take over your local school board. Beware.

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Up, Up, and Away

by Bill Kauffman

Space and the American Imagination
by Howard E. McCurdy
Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press; 416 pp., $29.95

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In a recent PBS documentary about the exploration of Mars, a NASA scientist lectured, "We are, after all, one planet. . . . Once we get off our planet, especially once there's a colony on another planet, national boundaries start to become really insignificant. . . . The New World Order isn't going to be America *über alles*, it's going to be Earth *über alles*; it's going to be an order where nations don't mean anything any more and what means something is what planet you're from."

So this is the future: the faceless billions of the third planet chanting "Earth! Earth! Earth!" as the TV screen reveals Mars being bombarded by nuclear missiles like so many Comet Shoemaker-Levys, and all because a Martian strongman/fugitive warlord/cult leader got cheeky with the bosses. In the background we hear Lee Greenwood croaking, "I'm proud to be an earthling . . . "

Howard E. McCurdy, a political scientist fascinated by "the relationship between imagination and public policy," has written a lively account of the "concerted effort by writers of popular science and science fiction, along with other opinion leaders, to prepare the public for what they hoped would be the inevitable conquest of space." This effort was marked in its incipience by an innocent exuberance, by romantic appeals to the imperative of exploration: the frontier myth was written across the sky. When starry eyes failed to open the exchequer, the proselytizers of spacefaring, from the "handsome and charismatic" Werner von Braun on down, resorted to Cold War scare-mongering. Works of imagination—novels, films, the space art of Chesley Bonestell—made Americans receptive to what became an enormous (if uncharacteristically sexy) public-works project. (Just as the terrific film *Apollo 13*—"astronaut" Tom Hanks aside; Whoopi Goldberg would have been more believable—was intended to renew public enthusiasm for NASA.)

The early pioneers of rocketry—Konstantin Tsiolkovski, Hermann Oberth, Robert Goddard—were inspired by Jules Verne to find a more plausible way of hurtling men moonward than the cannon used in Verne's *From the Earth to the Moon*. The visions of these men, in turn, inspired the rocket societies of the prewar era, which consisted of "German expatriates and science fiction fans." Von Braun and the popular science writer Willy Ley gave the American rocketeers a distinctly Teutonic accent. Space-flight advocacy has always been the realm of exiles, émigrés, and misfits—the unmoored.

The "advocates of space exploration faced a daunting task," writes McCurdy. "They had to find a group of people willing to finance their schemes." Since billionaire eccentrics who bankroll dreams exist only in science-fiction novels, "sensible advocates recognized the need for government support." Yet as R.C. Truax, commander of the Navy Bureau of Aeronautics and Space, told a 1954 symposium, "There is simply no overwhelming rational reason why we should try to set up a station in space, send a rocket to the moon, or take any other steps along the road towards interplanetary flight." President Eisenhower agreed. His "parsimony," McCurdy argues, was rooted in his mild skepticism about the military-industrial complex that soon would swallow whole the Vernian dreams of bug-eyed earthlings. And besides, Ike was busy with his own massive public-works project, the tellurian Interstate Highway System.

Fear trumps romance any old day. Neil Armstrong took his small step because enough politicians agreed with Senator Lyndon Johnson, who said in 1958: "Control of space means control of the world. . . . Whoever gains that ultimate position gains control, total control, over the earth, for purposes of tyranny or for the service of freedom."

"Public fears played a critical role in unleashing the billions of dollars necessary to begin the conquest of space," writes McCurdy. While Ike left to play golf the week of the SPUTNIK 1 launch, Cold War liberal Senator Scoop Jackson called it "a week of shame and danger." Space boosters eagerly "tied their ambitions to popular fears about the nuclear age." Earth's natural satellite was presented, absurdly, as an outpost of military significance; Mars had taken up residence on the moon. As one hawk advised in *Collier's*: "Control of the moon . . . could mean military control of our whole portion of the solar system."

In the movie *Destination Moon* (1950), a general explains, "The first country that can use the moon for the launching of missiles will control the earth. That, gentlemen, is the most important military fact of our century." Sorry, general. McCurdy notes, "In retrospect, few of the early warnings about the military significance of space turned out to be true."

Nevertheless, the fright worked. The space program was as criticism-proof as the Interstate Highway System had been. Congressional dissent was barely audible; LBJ had seen that "conservative Democratic senators, particularly those from the South, could be motivated to vote for a large government presence in space as a matter of national security." Between 1960 and 1965, NASA's budget increased tenfold. Eventually, several men bounded around on the moon. If NASA gets its way, tens of billions of dollars from now a few government employees will wind up on Mars.

Yet the collapse of the Soviet Union left NASA in search of a bogeyman to justify its budgets. The unknown asteroid flying toward earth, signifying destruction, was one candidate; the late Carl Sagan defined our choice as one between "spaceflight and extinction." But that danger seemed too remote, and having seen *When Worlds Collide*, we knew who would get the seats on the first ship out of here: models, politicians, and scientists. More recently, the search for extraterrestrial life has become NASA's favorite talking point. (Despite Sagan's oft-stirring magniloquence, the agency remains firmly embedded within the military-industrial complex. The current NASA chief, Dan Goldin, managed the construction of spy satellites for TRW.)

No offense to Tang or Gus Grissom, but public opinion polls never revealed overwhelming support for the space program. In 1960, a majority of Americans opposed the American invasion of the moon. Last summer, at the height of the Mars *Sojourner* hype, Americans by a 49-45 percent margin believed the probe to be a waste of money.

Doubters are accused of possessing mean, crabbed souls, of lacking even the

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most rudimentary imagination. "Civilization needs big projects, the kind that ignite the mind and inspire the soul," declared one space booster, apparently mindful of the volumes of splendid lunar poetry that have been published since 1969. "For all its material advantages, the sedentary life has left us edgy, unfulfilled," wrote Sagan. To take the edge off, the restless masses are urged to turn on the TV and watch the fortunate ones float weightlessly in their capsules. We can be vicarious explorers—contributors, too, every April 15!—to this magnificent venture, this grand expression of the human drive to explore. We gaze, starstruck, as billions and billions of dollars burn up upon re-entry.

This alleged American restlessness may define those who hold power but it does not explain the lives of the millions who, unedgily, stay put. Most scientists, unlike most blue-collar workers, are willing to sacrifice place for career: recall the incomprehension of Reaganites and neo-liberals when in the early 1980's laid-off Rust Belt workers didn't just move to Arizona and learn computer programming. In a centralized state and economy, the mobile rule the immobile. The grocery-bagger pays for the physics Ph.D.'s education, his federally funded research job, perhaps even the space colony on which he will one day frolic. We, the earthbound, can enjoy the stunning images sent back by the planetary probes, but we know our place: on the couch. City-dwellers can call up pictures of Mars on their computers, but they can't even see the red planet in the night sky, so bad the light pollution has become.

I write, by the way, as an astronomy buff who believes that there is, indeed, magic in the moon's mild ray. The greatest amateur astronomer of our century was a man named Leslie Peltier of Delphos, Ohio. From his native ground in western Ohio, Peltier commanded a view of the universe. He didn't need the aerospace industry for "fulfillment"; Mars was no farther than the telescope in his backyard. But then he had a backyard, unlike the intrepid heroes of TRW. Peltier was from Delphos, which was not an insignificant dot on a speck in the cosmos, as the mobile men of science so often tell the immobile payers of taxes, but the center of his universe.

In his beautiful memoir *Starlight Nights* (1965), Leslie Peltier wrote, "I know that someday man will reach the moon but I sincerely hope this will not happen for a long, long time. . . . If [man] must conquer something let it be himself." The word "conquest" is a favorite of the spacemen. The conquest of space. The conquest of the moon. The conquest of Mars. The conquest of the universe. Leslie Peltier concluded his book by confessing, "The moon and I have been firm friends all these many years." Does one conquer a friend? Just what on earth are we doing up there?

Bill Kauffman is the author, most recently, of With Good Intentions? Reflections on the Myth of Progress in America *(Praeger).*

New Blood

by John M. Vella

Catholic Converts: British and American Intellectuals Turn to Rome
by Patrick Allitt
Ithaca: Cornell University Press; 343 pp., $35.00

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The modern age has known many false prophets who have challenged the moral and spiritual beliefs of the Christian faith. Although churchmen have not always been vigilant in defense of traditional religion, one institution able to resist the secularizing trends of the 19th and 20th century has been the Catholic Church. But it has not done so, as Patrick Allitt suggests, because of an overabundance of intellectual creativity at its disposal. Indeed, the Church was slow to approve new developments in the natural and social sciences, historical research, and biblical exegesis for fear these new ideas might undermine religious faith. Yet, despite her resistance to innovation, from 1800 to 1960 the Roman Catholic Church in England and America attracted many gifted scholars and writers from diverse backgrounds who contributed enormously to the intellectual life of the Church and to the wider culture. Allitt, an Episcopalian who teaches history at Emory University, argues that these men and women dominated Catholic intellectual life and that their contributions to culture remain worthy of study.

These converts, as Allitt shows, became Catholics in the belief that the Church preached spiritual truths often denied by other religious communions. Being Christians already, they were choosing the religious denomination most faithful to the Gospel as they understood it; many, observing the threats to religious orthodoxy posed by secular liberalism, concluded that the Catholic Church possessed the means to resist these challenges, while other religious bodies did not.

Given the preference for neoscholasticism among Catholic prelates, converts who were not attracted to this philosophical school contributed to other areas of study: literature, history, and the social sciences especially. A number of British converts—including G.K. Chesterton, Hugh Benson, and Ronald Knox—"tried to dazzle their readers with wit, erudition, and ostentatious orthodoxy." Their approach, as Allitt points out, was to criticize the premises of non-Catholic philosophy and science, to show its epistemological weaknesses, and to reveal its ties to a callow idealization of progress. They also used their Catholic insights to enlighten contemporary political debates, making the case that, without the guidance of faith, social chaos would engulf the world. World War I gave their critique of progress new credibility in the eyes of a skeptical public weary of Catholic claims. As Orestes Brownson took up the cause against the cult of progress in America in the 19th century, so other converts have done in the 20th. For many of them, "progress" meant the rise of materialism, militant nationalism, and total war, and they feared that by turning away from Christ and the Church He founded, humanity was on the path of self-destruction.

Living through World War II and the advent of the Cold War, many converts began to question whether the moral decay of Western society could ever be halted. Cradle Catholics saw the rise of communism and uniformly opposed it; so did the converts. Arnold Lunn, prominent Olympic gold medalist and author, wrote political commentary for *National Review* while Christopher Hollis (like Hugh Benson and Ronald Knox, an Anglican bishop's son) became a staunch Conservative member of Parliament. But they, and others, questioned whether any means could prevent the deterioration of religion and morality.

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"We Catholics may be unable to arrest the world's progress to self-destruction," Arnold Lunn wrote to Ronald Knox in 1949, "but at least we understand what is destroying us. We have at least the melancholy satisfaction of not being simultaneously bewildered and annihilated."

Most of these writers were critical of scientism, the application of Darwinism to history, philosophy, and the social sciences in particular. They attacked Darwinism's extreme claims while defending what could be salvaged from its general theory in the understanding that science and Christianity are allies, not enemies. They frequently voiced opposition to eugenics, the Hitlerian byproduct of evolutionary theory, and they uniformly condemned Marx and his intellectual offspring. Here Allitt offers a reserved acknowledgment that, despite being seen as unfashionably narrow-minded and reactionary by their critics, these articulate defenders of Catholicism turned out to have understood Marxism correctly.

Relying heavily on secondary sources, Allitt is sometimes taken in by liberal Catholic historians with an ax to grind. Knowing that a scholar's contribution may be worthy of attention whether or not his work is recognized by his contemporaries, Allitt has discovered forgotten Catholic converts to make his case. Yet he neglects neoscholastic cradle Catholic philosophers and theologians whose intellectual achievements were equal to those of their better-known convert colleagues. John Courtney Murray and his intellectual nemesis, Msgr. Joseph Fenton of the *American Ecclesiastical Review*, were cradle Catholics, as were Anton Pegis and Vernon Bourke.

Is it fair to imply, as Allitt does, that Walter Ong, S.J., would not have become a gifted and well-respected scholar had he never studied under Marshall McLuhan, a convert? If an oppressive papacy is the cause of the Church's intellectual backwardness, why so many gifted French cradle Catholic writers such as Etienne Gilson, Paul Claudel, Leon Bloy, Charles Peguy, and George Bernanos? What are we to make of scholastic philosopher Yves Simon, who attended French Catholic universities in the 1930's, then fled the Nazi occupation to teach in South Bend at the University of Notre Dame?

Despite its failings, *Catholic Converts* is the best survey of English and American Catholic converts in print. It is reasonable to argue that, by comparison with cradle Catholics, converts in England and America, especially in the last century, did have a greater influence among the laity and a wider hearing from the non-Catholic world. These converts engaged a culture hostile to morality and religion, in circumstances not dissimilar to our own. We would do well to learn from the successes and failures of these veterans of the early culture wars.

John M. Vella is the managing editor of Modern Age.

Cultured Pearl

by Chilton Williamson, Jr.

I, Pearl Hart: A Western Story
by Jane Candia Coleman
Unity, Maine: Five Star;
222 pp., $18.95

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Late in October 1899, in the town of Deming, New Mexico Territory, the commander of Scarborough's Rangers recognized a face familiar to him from the pages of *Cosmopolitan* magazine, one of many publications then devoting considerable media attention to the Bandit Queen, a youngish woman from Chicago. In the company of another small-time crook, she had held up a stagecoach near Globe over in Arizona the previous May and robbed the passengers of $400. George Scarborough traced Pearl Hart and her companion, one Ed Sherwood in whose company she broke jail in Tucson, to a sordid hotel room where, surprising them in the altogether, he arrested the couple. Pearl's clothes being out to the Chinese laundry, Scarborough returned her to Tucson in men's dress—the disguise in which she had robbed the stagecoach as well as, in Miss Coleman's treatment of the story, ridden West from Chicago in a boxcar with a rail hobo named Joe Boot, later her accomplice in the Globe stage incident.

The story of Pearl Hart offers wonderful material for the competent writer, and Miss Coleman has turned it to full advantage in *I, Pearl Hart*, a Western *Sister Carrie* of sorts. Stage robbery aside, Pearl is probably best known for Scarborough's later assessment of her: she was, he said, one of the foulest-mouthed persons (not "women"!) he had ever listened to. Yet Pearl's vocabulary was by no means restricted to blasphemies and four-letter words. As the daughter of a respectable civil engineer, raised in a Catholic family and educated by nuns at a Catholic school in Chicago, she was a highly literate and—when necessary—articulate woman of no inconsiderable resources, as well as of cunning.

While the "memoirs" on which the novel is based are scanty to the point of nonexistence, Coleman has carefully researched what is known, and knowable, of her subject's life. Pearl Hart, who died in 1957 in her middle 80's, was notoriously reticent about her history; people acquainted with her in the years following her second marriage to a mining engineer, when the couple was living first in Cananea, Mexico, and later in Arizona, recalled a quiet woman rocking silently on her front porch while she smoked cigarettes. Her descendants, though agreeing to be interviewed by Miss Coleman, requested that she employ a pseudonym in place of her second husband's family name. No one knows how Pearl escaped from the Yuma Penitentiary in Arizona Territory, where she served time as the prison's first woman prisoner, and so the author has felt compelled to offer a fictional scenario of her own devising.

I, Pearl Hart is to some extent the story of a legend rather than of an historical figure, and yet the legend, in Miss Coleman's hands, is as much or more a novelistic creation as it is an historical one, a period piece. Yet the period is substantially recreated, and so is the place. Partly because Arizona, in its natural as opposed to its human aspect, has not changed that much in the last century, and partly because Miss Coleman (an Easterner from Pennsylvania, now resident in the lovely southeastern corner of the Grand Canyon State) has deep sympathy and an observing eye for the Southwestern landscape, the setting of her book is made present for the reader.

Pearl Hart came West from Chicago in flight from her first husband, Frank Hart, a professional gambler and compulsive wife-beater. Today the Old West is admired by conservative-minded people appreciative of a time and place in which men were men and women were

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women. In reality, fact is more complicated than myth. The frontier was a region in which adventurous and optimistic empire builders worked to recreate the civilization of the East by asserting and establishing conventional social values and customs. It was also a draw not just for simple outlaws but for social ones as well—unconstrained souls with what today would be described as countercultural inclinations in search of elbow room and a greater social relaxation. Pearl Hart, the Bandit Queen, belonged to the second category of outlaw much more than she did to the first. Miss Coleman's portrait of her shows a somewhat self-pitying, at times even self-dramatizing, victim, a forerunner of the stereotypical Battered Wife of modern times. Abused though she certainly was, spousal violence seems to have been a further impetus to Pearl's outspoken feminism rather than the fundamental cause of it.

Coleman's Pearl Hart is a woman impatient not just of A Woman's Place in Society but of society itself: an adventurer whose restlessness was determined not by the condition of her sex but by impulses basic to her character. On trial for her role in the Globe holdup, she delivers an impassioned address to the jury: "Think about me, separated from my children. Think about the fairness of your laws. Women sent to jail for adultery while men go free. Women blamed for the fact that their husbands beat them. Women who abandon their children because they can't care for them. This is justice?" She is acquitted, only to be rearrested immediately afterward on the separate charge of stealing the stagedriver's .45 pistol and sentenced to five years at Yuma.

The jacket photo shows a pretty young woman with short hair and a full (rather than foul) mouth, slender; wearing pants held up by embroidered suspenders over an open-necked shirt and reading a newspaper as she fondles what appears to be a bobcat (but is probably only a fierce tabby) at her side. The charm of Miss Coleman's Pearl Hart is not that of an early Betty Friedan but of one of those originals who pioneered the American frontier, as well as the less attractive, less interesting, and far more restrictive American future, in search of the space and openness that until recently at any rate have always spelled freedom for the American people.

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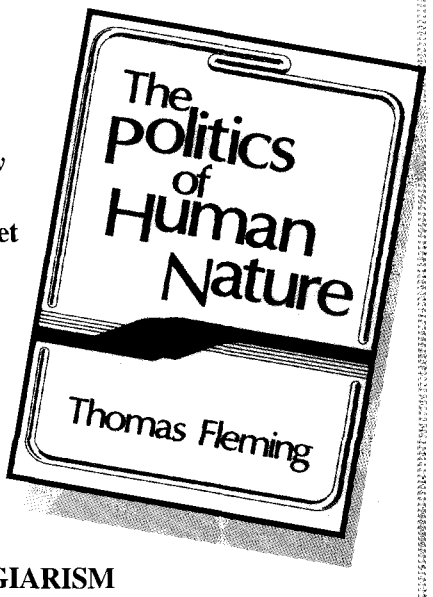

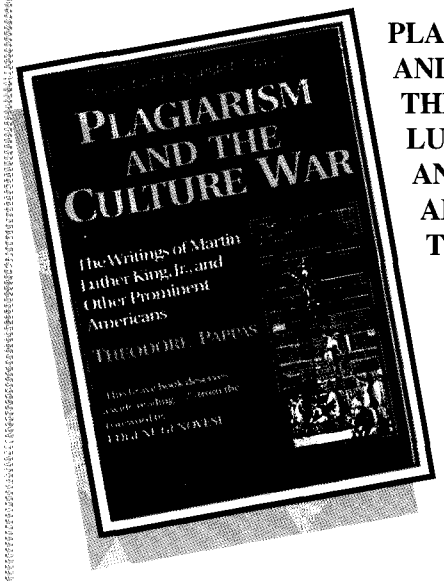

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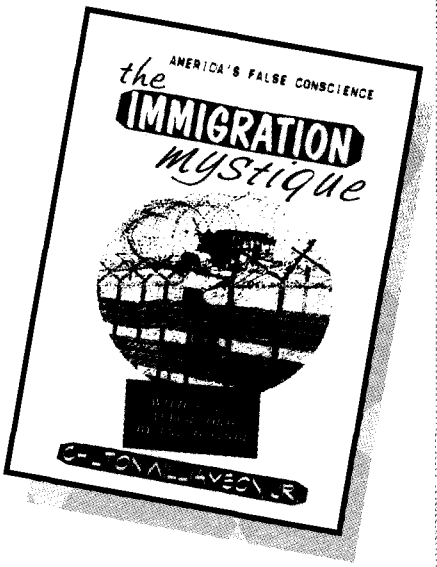

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by Samuel Francis

Prophesying War

Back in 1994, the *Atlantic Monthly* published a notable article by Robert Kaplan entitled "The Coming Anarchy." The article dealt with what Kaplan took to be global indications of impending chaos as resources dwindle, infrastructures decay, weapons are peddled, gangs and armed bands replace states, and ethnic, racial, and tribal loyalties prevail over less ferocious identities. The article was illustrated with several photographs of pitiful and chaotic scenes in such picturesque localities as Beirut, the Balkans, and Central Africa. One of the photographs, indistinguishable from the others, is from Los Angeles during the "Rodney King riots" of 1992.

To look at the last photograph and suddenly realize it's not Rwanda or Belfast but the second largest city in North America is jarring, and perhaps it was intended to be. If nothing else, the picture serves as a reminder that it can happen here, that it almost did happen here, and that it might well happen here in a short time to come.

That it *is* going to happen here is the thesis of a new monograph, *Civil War II*, by an ex-mercenary named Thomas Chittum, which has attracted no attention whatsoever in the mainstream book reviews but over the last few months has been a hot topic in what can today only be called the "Underground Right"—the buzzing hive of Internet sites, shortwave radio stations, one-man newsletters, guerrilla fax warriors, and other dissidents who use new and alternative technologies to construct their own counterculture. When it comes to warfare, Mr. Chittum—a Vietnam veteran and former artillery expert who served in Rhodesia as well as in Croatia—seems to know what he's talking about. Now he's settled down to prepare for the coming Armageddon that his book prophesies.

The premise of his prediction that the United States (sometime in the next generation or so) is going to collapse into an anarchic civil war is the ethnic and racial fragmentation of the nation that the Census Bureau has been projecting since 1992. By 2050, according to the projections, whites will constitute 52.5 percent of the national population (down from the current 74.8 percent), blacks will constitute 14.4 percent, Hispanics 22.5 percent, Asians 9.7 percent, and Indians 0.9 percent. As Mr. Chittum writes, "It's as if every day 3,000 whites were disappearing and being replaced by 3,000 minorities. Every single day! This is a sort of statistical ethnic cleansing engineered through liberal immigration laws and unchecked illegal immigration."

But Mr. Chittum's point is not that whites are ceasing to be a majority. His point is that whatever the mix of races and ethnic groups, the mix itself is the problem. He offers a list of other countries that have collapsed into ethnic conflict when the mix reaches certain levels. He allows that "multiethnic and multilingual nations can and do work. However, all evidence clearly indicates they work only if each group is allowed to conduct its own affairs without undue meddling by the central government." Switzerland and Belgium are examples of highly decentralized federal multiethnic states where the different ethnicities appear to be able to live with each other without cutting each others' throats. Such is not the case in the United States, however.

Here, federalism and decentralization are not happening and are not going to happen. The United States is in fact an empire, not only by reason of its military and political predominance but also its internal structure. Authoritarian trends in the central state, the increasing stratification of the social structure into an overclass and underclass, the destruction of the middle class, and the pattern of immigration all suggest an "imperial conversion" of the American nation-state.

But the imperium will be unable to control its own domain, for the simple reason that weapons, funds to buy them, and the will to use them, driven by ethnic-racial loyalties and hatreds, will outdraw the empire. The Los Angeles riots are a kind of paradigm for Mr. Chittum's grim predictions. In the course of the riots, armed street gangs undertook most of the actual violent action, and Mr. Chittum points out that while the City of the Angels alone sports no fewer than 100,000 gang members, the entire United States contains only about 554,000 full-time police officers. If the gangs wanted to, they could simply take over Los Angeles by force, and during the riots, police units actually retreated from armed rioters whose weapons were heavier than those of the cops. There were a number of incidents in which police squad cars deliberately ignored looting of stores—probably because they lacked the instruments of force to stop the looting—and Korean shopowners armed themselves to protect their shops and homes that the police refused to protect.

Of course, the state and federal governments could stop the rioting and the takeover by the gangs, couldn't they? Well, as a matter of fact, no, Mr. Chittum argues. Federal military bases within the United States are highly vulnerable to armed attack and neutralization. Designed to placate civilian tastes and sensibilities as much as military needs, military bases typically lack a cleared field of fire within which an invader could be cut down like ripe wheat, defensive perimeters of mine fields and armored bunkers that could deter invaders, adequate manpower, and adequate facilities for withstanding sieges. Moreover, no small number of the defenders of the bases will be co-ethnics of the attackers and could provide "fifth columns" inside the bases. The same is true of local and state police and national guard units. Your local military base might be terrific for entertaining the kids with a Veterans' Day parade, but don't count on the troops protecting your neighborhood during Civil War II.

In addition to the incipient ethnic and racial fragmentation of the nation, Mr. Chittum points to political and regional schisms already appearing. All of these will, in his view, enhance the likelihood of chronic armed violence throughout the country in the near future.

> When civil authority breaks down in America, our criminal gangs will instantly fill the power vacuum, just exactly as has been the pattern in other lands. The gangs have their organization and firepower to serve as the nucleus for actual armies. And since they will

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be self-financed in the coming time of chaos, they will grow like wildfire. Militias, cults like the Nation of Islam, and other armed organizations will also rapidly grow into full-blown armies.

Mr. Chittum also has some fascinating scenarios of how the conflict will play out in various areas of the country, particularly the South, where the ethnic and racial composition will be so mixed that certain "enclaves" may survive. Finally, he has some practical advice on how to survive even if you don't live in such an enclave: stockpile food, get a gun (he doesn't like handguns but recommends military semiautomatic rifles that fire easily available standard cartridges), and select the part of the country for your stronghold based on its capacity for economic self-sufficiency and distance from likely areas of conflict. Also, don't tell anyone what you're doing since otherwise you may enjoy unsolicited and none-too-friendly visits when your friends and neighbors realize you're prepared and they're not.

Mr. Chittum has no doubt that all this is going to happen, and indeed he makes a powerful case for it. But there are also reasons to think that it probably won't happen. First, with all due respect to ethnic and racial loyalties, there are other social relationships that are often no less powerful as group bonds. Given a chronic breakdown in the economic infrastructure and governmental enforcement of order, it is just as likely that regional, economic, class, and religious bonds will divide the population into mutually competing and conflicting groups. Race appears to mean very little either to Christian evangelicals or to most militia members, and at least some urban gangs are already ethnically mixed. Areas that depend on agriculture or on serving economic demands that could still be served and can't sustain themselves any other way would probably continue to function as fairly peaceful communities of mixed ethnic, class, and religious groups.

Moreover, even if ethnicity and race do become the primary identities for group existence and action, it does not follow that they will go to war with each other. Urban street gangs haven't made a bid to take over entire cities yet, despite the large funds from drug trafficking and the availability of sophisticated weaponry, precisely because they are criminals, not soldiers or empire-builders, and because they provide a certain sense of community and group bonding to otherwise socially crippled adolescents. It's more likely that the gangs will insist on pushing crack and running girls than attacking military bases, however soft and flabby. As for the militias, strange religious cults, white separatists, and similar underground movements, I've seen and read nothing about any of them that would convince me they're a serious danger to anybody. Most of their burned-out members seem to spend more time smoking dope and reading pornography than they do plotting guerrilla warfare. The fact is that, apart from criminals and a few lunatics, Americans in general today are couch cabbages whose closest approach to guerrilla warfare is the weekly argument over who holds the remote during *Melrose Place*.

But the major argument against Mr. Chittum's predictions is that the overclass, as flabby and crooked and imperial-decadent as it might be, is not about to let Civil War II take place. What Mr. Chittum doesn't entirely grasp is that the ruling class, as I have argued before, rules mainly through manipulation, not through force or intimidation. Ruby Ridge and Waco, which he sees as signs of impending reliance on force, are more likely signs of the incompetence of the ruling class at using force. Ruling classes that do rely on force (like the Nazis or the Communists) would have gobbled Randy Weaver and David Koresh at a single bite and not spent weeks pondering how to get them to come out peacefully. It's quite true that there is an emerging federal police state, but our incumbent ruling class, Republican or Democrat, simply isn't constructed to rely on it as its primary mode of power. Instead, it relies on manipulation, the deliberate inculcation of an apparently spontaneous and voluntary desire to obey, and soap operas, game shows, and professional sports are far more useful instruments of control for its purposes than BATF goon squads.

Mr. Chittum is entirely right about the ethnic, racial, social, and cultural fragmentation—"Balkanization"—that mass immigration is engendering, but it doesn't follow that the ruling class that permits, wants, and indeed commands that this fragmentation take place won't be able to control the results. Balkanization and fragmentation are themselves means of manipulation ("divide and conquer") by which the elites prevent the formation of any enduring national community that can challenge its own power. The real future, perhaps less exciting than that of *Civil War II*, is what various writers have called "Brazilianization," the disintegration of traditional community, class, and nation at the base of American society and the domination of a technically skilled, affluent (if not luxurious) overclass that is no less multiethnic in its composition but is bound together by its control of wealth, status, and political and cultural power. That is why American society becomes more "diverse" through immigration but more homogeneous through the uniform discipline exerted by the federal leviathan in conjunction with the mass consumer economy and mass instruments of culture and communication.

Mr. Chittum is aware of this line of criticism and tries to respond to it: "The overall tendency is for establishment types to predict a crime and poverty-stricken multiracial banana republic, something like Brazil. Brazil is wracked by violence, but has so far avoided massive bloodshed like Bosnia. In such a society, the establishment reckons it can endure quite nicely behind its razor wire, walls, and security guards. This optimistic view is based on their utter contempt for working-class whites. I'm confident they will be proven wrong, but time will tell.

I guess you can put me down as "an establishment type," though I don't consider the prophecy of Brazilianization an "optimistic view," and I don't harbor "utter contempt for working-class whites," even if they do tend to be couch cabbages. But you don't have to harbor "utter contempt" for anyone to believe that there is nothing in most Americans' background to prepare them for the kind of stockpile-and-shoot first future Mr. Chittum predicts. You do have to believe that most Americans can see no other option for themselves but a passive endurance of the regime the ruling class has created, and of course that is a narrow vision that the ruling class does all it can to maintain. But who knows, maybe Mr. Chittum will turn out to be right after all. If and when Americans are able to glimpse an alternative future in which they can displace the ruling class and its regime of manipulation through their own resistance, Mr. Chittum's book may pop up on the best-sellers list.

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Letter From Rome

by Andrei Navrozov

Where All Belong

◆

In my letter last month I tried to describe the noble seriousness of Italian life, unique in that it has given the modern world a middle class with a human face. Even on a simple physical level such as that of the naked eye or of the camera lens, one can observe this seriousness like a uniform glaze all over Rome; so uniform, in fact, that looking at a certain tangible space, say a corner of a market square or a street intersection, one cannot easily distinguish between the very old, the old, and the newer patinations.

A Russian photographer friend who lives in London came to visit for a few days. Generally I hate photography and photographers, and it is quite likely that I love Gusov all the more for being an exception to the rule: so one may delight in having a pimp, a fence, an editor of the *New York Times*, or a circus wrestler among the names in one's address book, and congratulate oneself for being a well-rounded, socially complete person. But Gusov isn't like that, really. Famous in England for his portraits of actors, artists, and musicians, since the death of Princess Diana he has insisted on calling himself a paparazzo.

He also collects combat and hunting knives. During the first day of his stay he trudged dutifully along to all the right places, such as the Colosseum, where the meaning of the phrase "butchered to make a Roman holiday" is usually expected to be revealed, but I could see he was coming unstuck. On the second day he announced he had a terrible stomachache, angrily waved away a beautifully presented plate of *trippa alla romana* at luncheon, and come evening was frying potatoes in sunflower oil ("No dill," he moaned, "they don't even have dill here!") and drinking warm vodka in the kitchen. I desperately needed to awaken him to the splendor that was Rome, and on the third day we took him to the Pantheon.

Opposite, almost directly beneath the inscription that reads like eternity's e-mail address, M.AGRIPPA.L.F.COS.TERTIVM FECIT, there nestles a small shop with all sorts of junk in the window. A moment later Gusov was singing an animated duet with the proprietor in assassin Esperanto wherein the relative merits of the Spyderco and the Applegate where expounded and compared. He emerged cured, and I saw that what saved him was the proprietor's manifest seriousness, his honest and openly held belief that his knife shop—not the rotunda opposite, not the Egyptian granite of the columns, not the *giallo antico* and *pavonazzeto*, not the tomb of Raphael—was the main attraction in the Piazza delle Rotonda. And, having emerged thus cured, my savage friend was finally able to traverse the majestic *pronaos* and even nose around inside Augustus' marvel without feeling alienated. He now felt he belonged.

Mark Twain, who swore that he would never repeat the phrase about the Roman holiday in his travel notes, lived in an age when the essence of banality was didacticism. In our own age it is incongruity, and one trope the 20th-century writer might swear to avoid is the city of contrasts. Contrasts, you see? Contrasts are wonderful, from the modern platitude-monger's point of view, because at the end of the day there is, as it were, no moral.

It is hardly a coincidence that the 20th century has raised photography to the level of art, so that the very word "contrast" now seems to belong to the darkroom. Photographers thrive on what they flatter themselves is Chekhovian ethical neutrality, and what they aim at is popularizing the incongruous at street level. Here is a small man with a big nose, they all like to say, standing next to a big woman practically without one, and behind them is a shiny Cadillac. "So what?" demands an audience of old fuddy-duddies. "So what?! Oh, philistines!" spit back the young artists. "Don't you understand *anything*? This is life in the raw, this is chance, this is nature bursting out of a bookish straitjacket! There are no plots anymore, don't you know, there is only situational *chiaroscuro*! Look, it's a city of contrasts!"

But as I said, Gusov isn't like that, perhaps because the Russians of my generation still have a sense of intellectual shame. We feel we must wash our hands after picking up somebody else's point of view, even if this means going without dinner. Which is why, having adapted to the city as man and thug, at this moment in his Roman sojourn he came to face a new and even more terrible dilemma, how to adapt to it as man and artist.

We are back to the noble seriousness of Italian life. Rome is not a city of contrasts. Perhaps no city is, but if one's objective is some sort of living truth, not to see contrasts here is far more vital than not seeing them in New York or Calcutta. Gusov is artist enough to have understood that; and for the second time in those three days I watched him coming unstuck, this time as a photographer. I would like to be able to report that when he first pointed his Nikon at a street corner, Baroque and mildewed and crumbling and covered with communist graffiti, to photograph a young woman, immaculately elegant, gliding past, his viewfinder melted like pagan bronze in the hands of Bernini; but this did not happen. He looked, and then he looked all around, and then he put the lens cap back on. Like him, the woman belonged.

It was a sentimental, Stalinist moment, rather like something out of a movie about the civil war when a White officer refuses to shoot a Bolshevik commissar because he too is Russian, or because he too has a soul, or because he too is part of the empire which will someday rule the world for the good of mankind. Those better acquainted with Hollywood depictions of the American Civil War, the civil rights movement, or, for all

When in Rockford,
Eat at
Lee's Chinese Restaurant
3443 N. Main Street

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I know, the holocaust, sexual harassment, and intergalactic strife, may substitute this with their own national cinematic clichés, in glorious color or racially insensitive black-and-white. The point is, Saul became Paul.

The following day being Sunday, we went for a stroll along the Corso. The Romans, in couples or more complex family groups, promenaded, pausing to examine shop windows, and without thinking what this meant, we did as the Romans. It meant stopping to look in every shop window on a street of shops that runs from the Vittorio Emanuele monument to the Piazza del Popolo, something like a mile or more. It meant standing for two or three minutes in front of each shop, peering at a display of men's socks that had changed all but imperceptibly since the previous Sunday, discussing, in respectful and leisurely undertone, the nature and meaning of the change. We saw every commercially available sock in Rome, and also all the ties, shirts, shoes, and ladies' unmentionables. We were very serious, and nobody laughed and said: "Listen, what's wrong with you fellows? Why are you staring at shops you'd never notice in London, even if they were open? And they're all shut, you idiots, on account of Sunday!"

Because this was Rome, where we all belonged. The mercer and the cobbler and the dyer had done their best during the week, and the photographer and I and everybody else in town turned out for the performance. Tomorrow it may be the mercer's turn to commission a photographic portrait of his children, my turn to sell an article, and everybody else's turn to do all the other serious things that one may do in a community of people who take life seriously and think that every story worth telling must have a moral.

For obvious reasons, politics of the global kind—"democratism," as an English journalist friend of mine calls (after Edmund Burke) the modern hybrid of totalitarianism and democracy—is just not one of those serious things. It is for this reason, perhaps, that the politically disabled Italians are such a joke among nations that have lost their sense of humor along with much of their liberty.

Andrei Navrozov, formerly Chronicles' *poetry editor and London correspondent, is now* Chronicles' *European correspondent.*

Stanzas in the Valley of the Fallen

(Santa Cruz del Valle de los Caídos)

by Rudolph Schirmer

Rifles are quiet, perpetual thunder subsides;
But though battle is done, the wonder of battle abides.
My ears are but ears, not wondrously tuned to the sounds
Of a nightmare that's past, the sobbing of underground wounds.
I am here on my own; I refuse to be otherwise drawn.
I abstain from the partisan gesture, I never would fawn
On the cloak of a victor, nor mourn for the vanquished sword.
I am here like a dove, in the shelter and grace of the Lord.
Were this earth but my earth, this sky but my sky, I would cry
For the horror entombed; for one corpse alone I would cry.
But my tear will not well for an alien clot, will not start
For a stranger's doom; there are dooms enough now in my heart.

Yet I stand in a terrible trance. Am I struck? Am I lame?
Do I falter so far from my hearth, am I seared by the flame
That the rock cannot drown, nor the crowds ever quench with their tread?
Am I damaged by death, by the distant, unknowable dead?
Give me guns! Let me strike where I stand, let me fire through the cloud
Of that stone for the sake of my star! Let it shine through the shroud!
Or stay—I will pray soft words for the stricken, will bend
Deep down for the friends of the lost, as though I were a friend.
For is it not owed in proof of the anguish I feel?
May the flesh stand erect when the soul would be silent and kneel?
Think again. It was war, was it not? In this mountain are men!
Blood has flowed, has it not? Women wept for that blood. Think again!

"Who are you, who is anyone here but a leaf like the rest,
At the whim of the wind to be tossed, driven east, driven west
Over land, over sea, in a swarm? Who are you to resist
What the trumpet proclaims and the captain commands? Laws insist
You adhere. Disappear if you can! You'll be caught, you'll conform,
And the price of your breach: to be thrust in the eye of the storm.
Death is your duty; alive, you are seeking the dead.
The valley ordained is never unscathedly fled.
There is no alternative. Man, you are foolish to leap
From the fold; curb that urge in the order of shuffling sheep.
What you cannot avoid you never should rule from your mind.
Prepare yourself now for the slaughter; follow your kind."

But I answer, "Here in the wind is a word—not sheep, not leaf—
A word of ineffable joy, transcending the grief,
A word worth my while to have climbed just to feel, not to hear,
In a context of stone, austere as the grave is austere.
Its imprint is graven on arches and ceilings and walls,
Outside on the hill, inside in the hill-hewn halls.
It extends to the plain, returns in a flash to the nave,
Is aflame in the sky and a flame in the hearts of the brave.
And the word says, 'Wait! Never tremble. Silence is meet.
That sword was a Cross, and the death that it carved, complete.
Rivers touch that once ran counter, here at your feet.'
God is the Word turns the bitterest battle sweet."

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FOREIGN AFFAIRS

What Robert Taft Could Teach Us Today

by Jeffrey Thomas Kuhner

Since the end of the Cold War American foreign policy has been incoherent. The Clinton administration has sent U.S. troops under U.N. authority to Somalia, Bosnia, and Haiti; tried to broker peace talks in Northern Ireland and the Middle East; bombed Iraq; ordered American warships to the Taiwan Straits; and antagonized China and Russia—while simultaneously feminizing the military. Most disturbing of all is Clinton's trivialization of foreign policy: the inability to identify primary strategic interests. But a model for post-Cold War American foreign policy does exist, and it was formulated by Ohio Senator Robert A. Taft.

The Cincinnati native, son of former President and Supreme Court Justice William Howard Taft, had a prestigious career in the Senate from 1939 until his death in 1953. Taft was "Mr. Republican," not only because of his leadership of the GOP during its long years out of power but because of his principled opposition to FDR's New Deal and Harry Truman's Fair Deal. A three-time presidential contender, he came close to defeating Eisenhower for the Republican nomination—and he almost certainly would have won the presidency. Taft was more than just the leader of the GOP forces in the Senate: he was also the political leader of the conservative Old Right. Although ideologically diverse, Old Right conservatives shared a common antipathy to statism at home and interventionism abroad.

Taft on Crusades for Democracy:

"We cannot undertake a crusade to spread the ideals which we approve without admitting the right of others to crusade for their ideals. A world of crusades would be a world perpetually at war."

Unlike most post-World War II American conservatives who have come to accept the New Deal and who strongly supported the policy of containment and global anticommunism throughout the Cold War, Taft saw a direct link between internationalism in foreign affairs and the growth of big government in domestic affairs (what he referred to as "creeping socialism"). Opposed to American entry into World War II and critical of the Cold War liberalism which championed the Truman Doctrine, the Marshall Plan, and the creation of NATO, Taft argued that interventionism abroad would only lead to bloated military budgets and "crushing taxation" at home. The Ohio Senator stressed that it was not the duty of the United States to export and protect democracy and human rights around the world. Such a Wilsonian policy would involve America in countless conflicts around the world wasting vast amounts of blood and treasure in the service of vacuous humanitarian goals which did not serve the national interest. Moreover, Taft understood that "a democratic form of government cannot be conferred on the rest of the world by force, by war, or by our domination of the world." He maintained that "democracy must rest on local self-government arising from within each people itself." By embracing an imperial role based on democratic universalism, the United States threatened to transform itself "into a militaristic and totalitarian nation as Rome turned from a republic to an empire."

For Taft, the primary objective of American foreign policy lay in preserving and protecting "the freedoms and liberty" of the American people and not those of other countries and peoples. Yet this did not mean that Taft was or considered himself to be an "isolationist"—a term of derision invented and used by supporters of Roosevelt's internationalist foreign policy to slander administration critics who sought to keep the United States from entering World War II. Taft never desired that the United States remain "isolated" from world affairs; rather, he understood that foreign policy was about making difficult choices on what to do in the world—and what not to do. American diplomacy, he believed, should be based on a prudent regard for the national interest.

This meant that the United States should follow a policy of unilateralism (or what he called a "free hand"), preserving its national sovereignty and independence in international affairs; that the United States should avoid involvement in military conflicts as much as possible; that the decision to go to war should be a last resort and only if the nation's vital security interests were at stake. Taft championed a continental realism, arguing that America could preserve its security and avoid involvement in foreign wars by erecting an impregnable Western Hemispheric defense perimeter encompassing North America, the Caribbean, and the northern tier of South America.

However, Taft did not believe that the United States should not concern itself with events beyond the Western Hemisphere. On the contrary, Taft consistently demonstrated a shrewd understanding of geopolitics: he supported economic aid to Britain in its fight against Nazi Germany; he sought financial assistance for Finland in its defense against Soviet aggression in 1940; he was a principled critic of FDR's war-time alliance with Stalin; he denounced the postwar Soviet domination of Eastern Europe; he voted in favor of the creation of the state of Israel in 1948; and finally, he expressed sympathy for small Asian nations such as Japan, Taiwan, and South Korea against the threat posed by Red China. Yet this did not mean the United States should involve itself in a shooting war either on mainland Asia or on the European continent. Taft warned that "nothing is so destructive of forms of government, particularly forms of democratic government, as war." The United States as the world's greatest democracy "must avoid war like poison, except when it is absolutely essential to protect our liberty." At his core, Taft was a geopolitical realist who

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understood that it was in America's long-term interest to have a multipolar world and to avoid unnecessary military conflicts.

For Taft, trade policy and national security were closely intertwined: a nation must have complete control over its economy as well as its national security. He opposed having America's economy or military intermeshed with those of other countries. On trade issues, Taft was a staunch protectionist in the Ohio Republican tradition of William McKinley and Warren Harding, believing that the protection of the domestic market took precedence over the need to expand export markets. Throughout his career he slashed away at foreign aid programs and multilateral trade pacts as wasteful and damaging to American taxpayers and workers. If he were alive today, Taft would certainly have voted against NAFTA, viewing its environmental and labor regulations as an abrogation of American sovereignty, and competition with Mexico's low-wage economy as harmful to the jobs of American workers. He would also call for the abolition of the IMF, the World Bank, and all other multinational economic organizations that use American tax dollars to serve the interests of foreign countries—and foreign business. He would be against any bailout of the failing Asian economies. Taft's message would be unequivocally clear: American tax money should stay where it belongs—at home.

Although a strong supporter of international law and the United Nations' Charter, Taft rejected the notion of having American soldiers serve under U.N. command as they did during the Korean War. "So far as the Korean War is concerned," he declared in 1953, "forget the United Nations." He believed that if American troops must fight on foreign soil, they should do so only under American military command—definitely not as they are today, with American men (and women) serving under the authority of U.N. bureaucrats in so-called "peacekeeping" operations around the world.

Taft was an early and vociferous critic of what would later be called the "imperial presidency." Persuaded that FDR's cynical attempts to push the United States into war prior to Pearl Harbor, as well as Truman's decision to send troops to Korea without congressional approval, had established dangerous precedents, he demanded that Congress be fully consulted and have a strong voice in foreign policy decisions. He feared that the absence of presidential accountability and congressional oversight would lead the United States into imperial endeavors in far-off nations of little interest and value to ordinary Americans. Taft's point about the dangers resulting from a lack of congressional authority in foreign affairs was especially prescient in light of subsequent American history: Vietnam, Somalia, Bosnia, and Haiti. All of these interventions have been characterized by "mission creep," the absence of congressional involvement, and a failure to achieve electoral consensus.

Looking at American diplomacy today, Taft would almost certainly be outraged, decrying the neo-Wilsonian enthusiasm to intervene in hot spots all over the globe without any clear sense of the national interest or of limits on the country's resources and ability to sustain its overweening international presence. Taft would call for a retrenchment of America's superpower role in the world. He would say it is time for an immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops from Bosnia and Haiti; he would say "no" to NATO expansion into Eastern Europe; he would insist that Japan and Western Europe bear more of the responsibility for their own military security; and he would demand an end to foreign aid to Russia, which has seen billions of dollars thrown down a rathole, serving only to sustain the corrupt former communists who continue to thwart real economic reform.

As an anti-statist conservative, Taft was repelled by what an activist foreign policy required—massive foreign aid programs, large military budgets, big government. Critics have long argued that, in an age dominated by Hitler's Germany and Stalin's Russia, Taft's desire to confine America's vital interests to the Western Hemisphere was unrealistic. Even if this were true, the Cold War has been over for nearly a decade, and there are no great totalitarian powers left in the world. Surely, it is now time for a neo-Taftite foreign policy to reverse America's march toward empire and to forge instead a diplomacy devoted to the national interest, to limited government, and to the restoration of the Old Republic.

Jeffrey Thomas Kuhner is a Ph.D. candidate in 20th-century American history at Ohio University. He is writing his doctoral dissertation on Robert Taft.

FILM

A Clever Diversion

by Clyde Wilson

Amistad

Produced by Steven Spielberg, Debbie Allen, and Colin Wilson
Directed by Steven Spielberg
Screenplay by David Franzoni
Released by Dreamworks

If *Amistad* is not yet a household word like *E.T.* or *Jurassic Park*, it may soon be with the power of Steven Spielberg behind it. *Amistad* is really two movies. One, about the 19th-century slave commerce between West Africa and Latin America, is a powerful piece of filmmaking. The other, about American politics and law, is completely hokey and misleading.

Nobody knows for sure, but from the mid-1500's to the mid-1800's, 11-15 million black Africans were transported to the New World, a vast undeveloped region with a voracious appetite for unskilled labor. Every maritime nation in Europe participated in this trade. Only about six percent of the Africans ended up in North America, the vast majority going to South America and the Caribbean. By the time of the *Amistad* incident (1839), the market was largely limited to Cuba (a Spanish colony) and Brazil (a Portuguese dependency). And the only shippers involved were Spaniards, Portuguese, and New Englanders.

In case you haven't heard, the *Amistad* was a Spanish ship bound from West Africa with captured slaves to be sold in Cuba. The captives revolted and killed most of the crew. After drifting for a long time, the ship was intercepted by a U.S. Navy vessel and taken into a Connecticut port. (How it got that far north is not made clear in the movie.)

Thus the *Amistad* case relates largely to the history of West Africa and Latin America. Only by an accident of navigation did it become an American issue, and then only as a case in admiralty and diplomacy. In the long run, it was a minor case that set no precedents. Spiel-

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berg wants to make this incident bear the whole weight of the American slavery that lasted two and a half centuries and the Great Unpleasantness that ended it. Thousands of *Amistad* study kits have been sent out to schools with this goal. The trouble is, as an account of American history, *Amistad* will not bear the weight. The *Amistad* had no influence on the nearly four million American slaves in America on the eve of the Civil War (most of whom had been here for generations), on the 385,000 slaveholding families, on the 488,000 free blacks (90 percent of whom, contrary to the usual assumption, were in the South), nor on the issues and events which led to the bloodiest war in American history.

One of Spielberg's assistants called me early on, wanting advice on the characterization of John C. Calhoun, whom I am supposed to know something about. For a moment, visions of fat Hollywood fees danced before my eyes. Then, I remembered what Grandmother said: Stand up straight, look 'em in the eye, and always tell the truth. I had to say Calhoun had nothing to do with the *Amistad* case and nothing to say about it. (The assistant, by the way, identified himself as a South Carolinian. By his speech and the fact that he had had a scholarship to Harvard, I assumed he is an African-American. He was very good, almost as slick as a young Strom Thurmond. I would advise him to come home and go into politics.)

Calhoun is shown in the movie (and the actor who plays him is very good) as declaiming about slavery and impending civil war in relation to the case. This did not happen and could not have. I have since learned where the filmmakers got this notion. Like Ken Burns, Spielberg's people have been taken in by the great Boston-o-centric stream of American myth and "history." They got the idea of using Calhoun, as well as the idea that the case was some kind of major event and triumph for Adams, from Samuel F. Bemis's romanticized biography, *John Quincy Adams and the Union*. The idea of having Adams, one of the nastiest major figures in American history, portrayed by Anthony Hopkins as a shrewd, cuddly old teddy bear could only have come from Hollywood. Get his picture sometime, look at that cold hateful face, and you will understand why Randolph of Roanoke called him Blifel, after the puritan hypocrite in *Tom Jones*.

Bemis claimed that Calhoun introduced resolutions in the Senate on the *Amistad* case to thwart Adams. He even quoted two of the resolutions, conveniently leaving out the third, which was specific. In fact, Calhoun's concern at this time was a different question. British officials in the Bahamas were undertaking to free the slaves on American coastal vessels that came by accident into their waters. (It was common for plantation families to move with their slaves from the South Atlantic to the Gulf Coast states by ship.) The British freed any slaves who came into their hands, although they later paid an indemnity to the United States for this action, an admission of illegality.

Adams was at this time a marginalized figure, a failed President who could not even get elected governor of Massachusetts. Calhoun was much more influential. By falsely setting up Adams as an antagonist to Calhoun, Bemis, and the movie, lend more importance to Adams than is deserved. There is also the question of motivation. It is all a love of liberty on Adams' part, according to this rendering. (And part as well of the larger myth that, to free the suffering black man, the South had to be brutally conquered.) The fact is that Adams had become President in a election that was brokered in the House of Representatives under cries of "corrupt bargain." He had proceeded to propose grandiose plans of centralization and mercantilism, repudiating everything that had been taught by Jefferson, Madison, and Monroe. He was immediately shot down and destroyed by Southern strict constructionists. He hated what one of his descendants called "the sable genius of the South" and devoted his last years to attacking it at its weakest point, slavery. Contrary to Bemis, Spielberg, et al., his "motivation" had nothing to do with freedom or with the welfare of people of African origin.

Foreign importation of slaves was illegal and negligible after 1808. Participation in the slave trade to other countries was also illegal for Americans. But in fact, New Englanders, who had plenty of shipping and entrepreneurial energy, continued to invest and participate in the traffic from Africa to Latin America on a considerable scale. This included the Brown family, who endowed Brown University, and Thomas H. Perkins, the Boston merchant prince who bankrolled Daniel Webster's career, as well as many lesser fry. The last known New England slave ship, sailing from Maine, was captured in 1862, a year in which oceans of blood were being shed for the alleged purpose of freeing the slaves.

By the 1830's the British, who had not long before been the largest slave traffickers in the world, had declared emancipation (of a sort) in their colonies and had undertaken to suppress the transatlantic trade by naval power. Many nations, including the United States, approved the object, but they did not approve of Britain's self-proclaimed right to search and seize other countries' ships on the high seas, which led to war with Britain in 1812. In 1842, Americans agreed to participate in the suppression of the trade as long as the Brits followed strictly defined rules. Southern naval officers, diplomats, and other officeholders carried out their duties in this regard conscientiously, and generally favored the policy. For instance, Henry A. Wise (later governor of Virginia and a Confederate general), while he was U.S. Minister to Brazil in the 1840's, made serious efforts to intercept the New Englanders trading Africans to South America.

Except for a few hotheads seeking to provoke the Yankees, there was no interest in the South, even though the demand was high, in slave importations after the early 19th century. No one wanted to disrupt the settled and peaceful system that existed. The Confederate constitution, unlike that of the United States, absolutely forbade foreign slave importations. The determination of Southerners to prevent malicious outsiders to interfere in their society is, of course, an entirely different question. *Amistad* diverts attention away from the real issues of American history.

But there are other things that the movie also distorts. Adams makes a pretty speech about liberty to the Supreme Court. I cannot find any evidence to prove that this speech was actually delivered. What appears in the printed court record is legalistic, though it is possible the speech could have been made in unrecorded oral argument. In the film, the leader of the *Amistad* captives, Cinque, is present in the Supreme Court, which did not happen. And there is a totally fictional character, an affluent free black man played by Morgan Freeman. Contra the film, no black man, no matter how affluent, would have been permitted to sit in a courtroom or ride in a carriage with white people in the North in 1839. Especially in Connecticut.

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This is mentioned in the film but not dwelt on: the *Northern* judges ruled *against* the freedom of the *Amistad* captives. The Supreme Court, with a majority of slaveholding *Southerners*, rendered the proper decision: the Africans had been illegally seized and were *freed*. Then, according to American law, they had to be sent back to Africa. In addition, a law professor tells me that the movie badly distorts the legal issues and proceedings of the case, though these take up most of the film.

Here is the real clincher. Samuel Eliot Morison, one of the leading American historians of all time, wrote in his *Oxford History of the American People* (1965 edition, p. 520) that Cinque, the leader of the *Amistad* captives, went back to West Africa and became a slave trader himself! Being from Boston, Morison did not have to give any source for this statement. Some writers have affirmed, others have denied, this story, none of them having cited any source. In fact, except for the court record, everything that has been printed about the *Amistad* case is in the realm of romance rather than historical scholarship. The court record is full of lawyers' and diplomats' lies, but at least it's a document.

Morison's story is inherently likely. He was well connected in New England maritime circles. New England ships frequently went to the coast of West Africa to sell rum and buy slaves and could have easily heard news of Cinque. Morison could have had the story word of mouth from an old man who had been there, or his descendants. That Cinque became a slave trader is highly plausible. What else could the man do? His native village had been dispersed. West Africa had little else to trade for European goods except its people. It would have been the best entrepreneurial opportunity open to him. The region's economy and politics consisted largely of competition between chiefs for market share.

To further develop the hokeyness of *Amistad*'s portrayal of American life and politics, let me review the little-known history of another slave ship case. In 1858, a U.S. Navy vessel intercepted a suspicious looking ship near the Cuban coast. It turned out to be the *Echo*, out of Providence, Rhode Island, with over 400 Africans on board, many of them in very miserable condition. The officer who captured the slaver was John N. Maffitt, who a few years later would be famous as the commander of the Confederate raider *Florida*. The captain and owner of the slaver was Edward Townsend, a well-educated man from what passed for a good family in Rhode Island. He alleged that the Africans were all war captives or families of executed criminals and that he had saved them from certain death. He also said that had he completed his voyage, he and his silent investors could have cleared $130,000, a staggering sum in those days.

Maffitt took Townsend to Key West to be prosecuted. The Northern-born federal judge, later a Unionist, refused to take jurisdiction. Maffitt then had him sent to Boston, where the court had jurisdiction on the presumed point of origin of the *Echo*. There the federal judge also refused to proceed, and Townsend walked free, though guilty of a crime equivalent to piracy in American and international law. (To avoid confusion, it should be pointed out that there was another New England slave ship named *Echo* that was captured in 1860, shortly before the Lincoln crisis in America. Almost two years later, the captain, a man named Gordon from Maine, was hanged by the U.S. government when it was most expedient to convince Europeans that the Union cause was justified by antislavery. As far as I know, this is the only one of thousands of Northerners engaged in the slave trade who was ever punished.)

The *Echo*, its crew, and captives were taken to Charleston. The people of Charleston provided them with food, clothing, and other necessities and treated them with sympathy. The U.S. District Attorney in Charleston was James Conner, who a few years later would lose a leg fighting in the Confederate Army. Unable to get hold of Townsend, he vigorously prosecuted the crew. However, the juries felt (probably correctly) that the miserable polyglot lot were as much victims as criminals, having been shanghaied or tricked into the voyage. The mortality rate of the *Echo* captives was over 30 percent. The survivors were returned to Africa, though it was reported that many of them did not want to go. (The story of the *Echo* case comes from the research of my former student, Dr. John C. Roberson.)

I recount this case to provide some contrast to the cartoon version of American history given in *Amistad*. The movie presents a distorted picture and very possibly will arouse hatred at a time when it is the last thing needed. The rehearsal of ancient guilt and outrage is not a healthy activity for Americans, African- or otherwise. It requires selecting out a few scapegoats to blame for all the long record of the crimes, misfortunes, and follies of mankind. Psychologists call this projection. Its purpose is to save us the trouble of examining our own problems and sins.

Clyde Wilson is a professor of American history at the University of South Carolina.

The Titanic 90's

by Egon Richard Tausch

Titanic

Produced by James Cameron and Jon Landau
Directed by James Cameron
Screenplay by James Cameron
Released by Paramount and 20th Century Fox

The umpteenth movie about the sinking of the great ship finally meets modern standards. James Cameron's Academy Award-winning *Titanic* may be the "movie of the year," but it is just as dishonest, immoral, cowardly, vulgar, and historically ignorant as our own age is. The true story of the *Titanic* is the stuff of tragedy (in the Greek sense), heroism, and history. So Hollywood has decided to skip it; the young wouldn't understand. Instead, we are given a three-hour melodrama of post-adolescent lust, combining the philosophical depth of 1970's *Love Story* ("Love means never having to say you're sorry") with the epic grandeur of a lemming migration.

Some older people might remember the elegant, 1953 Barbara Stanwick-Clifton Webb drama of the same name, which provided a moving love/hate story, with surprising twists and sparkling dialogue, ending in self-sacrifice and transcendent glory, while never forgetting the saga of the sinking ship. Florence King accurately predicted that Hollywood would never again permit such a film with its powerful ending, because "If I can respond emotionally to a full-throated rendition of 'Nearer My God To Thee' with every atheistic fiber of my

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eing, imagine the effect it would have
ı millions less warped. The resulting
iritual rejuvenation would bankrupt
e sex-and-violence business over-
night." Other people will remember the 1958 film *A Night to Remember* (based on Walter Lord's historical report and analysis) in which the ship is the whole story, and nothing is lost by the absence of a subplot. These were movies of another age, if not another planet.

The excuse usually offered for a degrading movie re-make is that it is a more accurate description of the historical events. Although this lie is less harmful than philosophical dishonesty, it must be dealt with at the outset lest one be accused of seeking to perpetuate pretty myths. The errors in this movie range from anachronistic howlers to blind modern hubris. A few of the former: Only two classes—first class (bad), steerage (good); second class must have played hooky. The obligatory (if cynical) church service with the old Episcopalian hymn for protection from "peril on the sea," strangely includes the entire verse added in 1937 (25 years after the *Titanic* sank) about "peril in the air." (*The Flying Titanic*?) The prologue of modern divers resurrects the old debate among survivors concerning whether the ship broke in half while upended and trots it out as a "new discovery" revealed by computer graphics (if it's on the monitor, it must be true). Yet there is no mention of the new discovery—that the *Titanic*'s steel was sulfuric and inferior, making the hull as brittle as glass in icy water.

Slightly more serious is the film's suspension of the laws of physics: the suction from the huge, vanishing ship only mildly tumbles those people (including our lead couple) hanging onto the stern. All the floating survivors are thickly coated with glittering ice in 40 degree water and calm, 60 degree air. Earlier, however, our leads swim throughout the interior of the sinking ship, in their skivvies, with no apparent discomfort. Interestingly, the higher the deck, the deeper the water. Stacked dishes start to slip only when the ship is nearly vertical. The passengers on the outside decks are sliding (tobogganing?) down the entire, steep length of the ship, while those inside are still ambling along horizontal passageways.

The next step down, for the show as well as society, is the vulgarity cheered throughout. It could thrill only those teenagers who think that "hawking" onto well-dressed matrons and other strangers is the height of wit. The bratty leads delight in it.

Since the weak "love" plot—boy meets betrothed girl, they copulate in the backseat of an auto stored in the hold, then devote themselves to insulting everyone else on board—can't fill out the film, scraps must do: an evil and cuckolded villain who would have been an embarrassment in a 1912 music hall; a motionless 20-minute death scene, with mumbling; a ubiquitous, priceless navy blue "diamond" with nary a sparkle (perhaps plastic was expensive in 1912). The "best friend" of the male lead is finagled on board by him, then forgotten 15 minutes from port, never to be seen or heard from again. The Second Officer, guilt-ridden from having to protect a lifeboat with a firearm, blows his brains out. The villain shoots at the fleeing fornicators until he's out of ammo, but he can't seem to hit anything, however close. (His butler also is armed and incompetent.) And here we thought the cold water was the real threat.

Now we come to the danger of this movie as cultural icon, the reason for producing it and for its critical acclaim: the total deconstruction of history, virtue, society, and taste. Some of this just shows off the filmmaker's attitude problem: Picasso's and other modern artists' canvasses are dragged in merely to offend the rich philistines and to be praised by the oh-so-hip "hero"/artist (whose charcoal sketch of his nude lover, a tiresomely repeated plot device, reveals that his own style runs more to old Vargas *Playboy* nudes, or the Betty Grables on World War II fuselages, sans swimsuit).

The female lead is, of course, the only person to count the lifeboats and passengers and discover the discrepancy, as soon as the *Titanic* is at sea. Says our sensitive hero, "You're the finest girl . . . uh . . . woman I've ever known." Quotes attributed to Freud are used to bludgeon male passengers. A major theme is that in the bad old days women could advance only by marrying rich husbands, while men had it made. The historical fact is that up until the "greedy" Victorians almost all European and American super-rich, male and female, got that way by marriage or inheritance, at least since William the Conqueror. Even today, ambitious male executives must court their superiors as assiduously as any desperate spinster. The heroine of this movie scorns the rich men as "Masters of the Universe"; perhaps she read Tom Wolfe's *Bonfire of the Vanities*. In the epilogue, framed photographs show that this female survivor, formerly a betrothed bride cruelly oppressed by thoughts of future wealth and "cotillions," becomes a penniless but liberated aviatrix, horse-master (-mistress?), and, judging by one fuzzy picture, head of a top law firm. But that's to be expected from a finishing-school girl who decks burly sailors on the *Titanic* and can cut handcuffs off with one blow of a fire-ax.

Add to this mess slanders against the individuals whom history and survivors recorded as acting heroically: Guggenheim is shown as a selfish stuffed-shirt for dying with dignity; the officers take cash bribes from the "Masters of the Universe" for berths on lifeboats; the "Unsinkable" Molly Brown is a useless coward (bullied and defeated by a male, of course); Captain Smith is a buffoon, brow-beaten into dangerous speed by the greedy rich; John Jacob Astor is a cardboard fop; and the Strauses, who in real life deliberately chose to die together, are shown only silently stuck in a floating bed. The orchestra members who gave their lives to calm the passengers are portrayed as fools who actually increase the panic. The sop to religion is in the person of a droning priest, who, in skillful closeups, shows us more of his tonsils and fillings than of his faith.

It would be forgivable to turn the sinking of the *Titanic* into a mere misfortune rather than a tragedy, but to make it trashy is not. The overall theme of this movie is the negation not only of those values illustrated in history and in previous films, but of virtue itself, and any human capacity for it.

The characters, from leads to bit-parts to extras, without even one exception, are so repulsive or irritating that one feels like cheering their deaths, if not actually throttling them. But that would be a waste of energy, because during the epilogue the passengers are resurrected into the ship's grand hall to applaud deliriously the reunion of the iceberg-crossed lovers in the afterlife, 80 years later.

And this movie cost a mere $200 million to make—the most expensive in history. Truly a film for our time and culture. Shuffleboard, anyone?

Egon Richard Tausch is an attorney in San Antonio, Texas.

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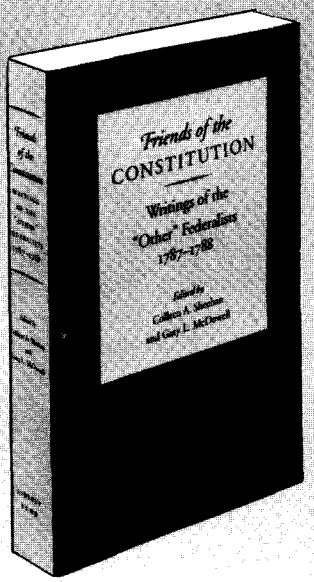

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